The Order of the Gospel,

Professed and Practised by the Churches of CHRIST in *New-England*, Justified, by the Scripture, and by the Writings of many Learned men, both Ancient and Modern Divines; In Answer to several Questions, relating to Church Discipline

By Increase Mather, President of *Harvard Colledge* in *Cambridge*, and Teacher of a Church at *Boston* in *New England*.

Jer. 2. 21, 36 *I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed*---*why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?*---

Col 2. 5. *Joying and beholding* your Order, ... *and the* Steadfastness *of your Faith.*

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Quicquid præcipiti via
Certum deserit ordinem
Lætos non habet Exitus.
Boetius.

The Epistle Dedicatory:

TO THE Churches of CHRIST IN New-England:

THAT the Churches which are called *Reformed*, have attained unto but an *Imperfect Reformation*, is a Truth not to be denyed: The defect has not been so much in *Doctrine* as in *Worship and Discipline*. Nevertheless, in this respect some Churches have gone beyond others. In *Geneva*, *France*, *Holland*, they have made an higher Progress then in *Germany*: of which the chief *Reformers*, such as *Melanthon*, *Martyr*, *Musculus*, *Zanchy* and others were very sensible, bitterly complaining that many who were willing to cast off *the yoke of Antichrist*,

yet were not willing to Subject to *the Yoke of Christ*. Amongst all the Reformed Churches, some have given the Preference to the *Bohemian-Brethren*, who sprang from the *Waldenses*, and they from the true Apostolick Church, not corrupted with Popery. These did *Luther* in the year 1524 misslike, because of their *strict Ecclesiastical Discipline*. But twelve years after that, he saw cause to alter his Judgement, and write in Defence of those Holy Churches, which once he had written against, bewayling his own Error in that he had been so Lax in Admissions to the Lords Table, and wishing that the *Evangelics* in *Germany*, had began *the Reformation* with *Discipline*, and not with *Doctrine* only. For which change of his Judgement Popish Authors do unworthily upbraid him, since it was a change for the better. *Lasitius* (the Polish Historian) sayes, that if any where in the World *the Primitive Apostolical Churches* were to be seen, it was amongst the *Ecclesiolæ*, the poor little Churches of the *Bohemian Brethren*. When Learned *Bucer* heard one of their Ministers (who was sent on purpose into *Germany* for that end) give an account of *the Order of their Churches*, he burst out into Tears, saying to the other Divines Present, *This is Heaven upon Earth*. *Vergerius*, (that famous Preacher who having been the *Popes Legat* to the Emperor, taking *Calvins Institutions* into his hands with a design to confute him, was Converted thereby) wrote to an Eminent

Eminent Perſon in thoſe Churches, that he Prayed for nothing in this world ſo much as that he might Live and Dye a member amongſt them. Now that wherein theſe Churches did chiefly Excel, was their *Order* Eſpecially in *their great ſtrictneſs as to Admiſſions to the Lords Supper.* It was in thoſe dayes objected againſt them, *Fratres non habent Eccleſiam apertam,* that their *Churches were encloſures,* and their Church doors were too ſtrait. But they knew that the Scripture calls the Church a *Garden Encloſed, a Spring ſhut up, and a fountain Sealed.* Cant 4. 12. They were wont to Anſwer ſuch as made that objection againſt them, *Chriſt has taught us that we muſt not give Holy things, Except to Holy Perſons. Religion* (ſaid they) *is not to begin with the Sacrament, but with Repentance and Faith. And as Chriſt would not commit himſelf to all that Profeſſed Faith, ſo neither muſt we. There are many that prove* Abortive Chriſtians, *we muſt be as careful as we can, that we be not deceived with ſuch Communicants. And therefore the Conſciences of ſuch as offer themſelves to our Communion are to be ſearched into, and they muſt be tryed concerning their ſincerity again and again; and Obſervation made what Fruits that are Evidences of true Repentance do appear in them.* This was the Doctrine: This was the Diſcipline of thoſe famous Churches. Thus did they Practiſe for many years. But by reaſon of an *Univerſal Toleration,* and through *Corruption in their Schools,* they

degenerated, and wonderfully loſt their Diſcipline, until the Jealouſy of the Lord diſſipated and deſtroyed them all. A late writer obſerves, that for the ſpace of *Forty years* the *Reformed* Churches in *France* kept cloſe to their *Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline*, but after that they grew remiſs. And what has God done to them all at this day? It was ſpoken to the Church in *Epheſus*, *Rev.* 2. 4, 5. *Thou haſt left thy firſt Love, Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and do the firſt works, or elſe I will come to thee quickly, and will remove thy Candleſtick out of his place.* The *Revelation* was written *Forty years* after the Church in *Epheſus* was firſt planted. The *Firſt Generation* of Church Members in that time were doubtleſs the moſt of them dead: their Succeſſors wanted *the Firſt Zeal* for the wayes of Chriſt wherein their Predeceſſors had Excelled. This at laſt iſſued in a Removal of the Candleſtick.

And ſhould not the dear Churches of *New-England*, be awakened by ſuch awful Examples to take heed leaſt it be thus with them? And therefore to beware of *Declenſions*, either from *the Faith* or from *the Order* of the Goſpel. There is that which the Scripture call, *the preſent Truth*, in which in a ſpecial manner we ought to be *Eſtabliſhed*. 2 *Pet.* 1. 12. *viz.* That which is very Peculiarly the Truth of the Age or the Place where the Divine Providence has caſt our Lot. And this is *Now* the Truth which dos concern *Eccleſiaſtical Polity*.

Polity. That is it, for which our Fathers suffered a *Voluntary Exile* into this Wilderness, when it was a Land not Sown. Here God rewarded them with shewing to them *the form of his House, with all the outgoings thereof, and all the comings in thereof.* Mr. *Brightman,* before ever there was a *New England,* Conjectured that there would be some Faithful Servants of Christ in a *Wilderness,* unto whom he should make *Singular Discoveries* of Truth; which several Judicious Authors have Esteemed as a Prophetical Passage fulfilled in what has come to pass in this *American Desert.* However, The Truths which respect *Church Order* are they which these Churches above any other are concerned to maintain: And an *Apostacy* from them would in *New-England* be a greater Sin and Provocation to Christ, then in any Place in the whole world. *Regenvolscius* in his *Ecclesiastical History* of the *Slavonian Churches,* relates that *Lucas Brugensis,* (a man famous for his Learning and Piety amongst the *Bohemians,*) was wont to say, that he did not so much dread all the Enemies and Persecutors whom they were continually endangered by, as he was *afraid least remissness in their Holy Discipline would prove the ruin of their Churches.* His *Prediction* was sadly verified. I pray God the like fate may never attend these Churches, in too many of which there is an amazing *Relaxation of Discipline.* Sure I am, that *to depart from the Order of the Gospel* established in these Churches in

the

the dayes of our Fathers, and declared in *the Platform of Discipline*, is not the way to obtain such signal Divine protections as they were favoured with. *Isa.* 4. 5. If we Espouse such principles as these, Namely, *That Churches are not to Enquire into the Regeneration of those whom they admit unto their Communion. That Admission to Sacraments is to be left wholly to the prudence and Conscience of the Minister. That Explicit Covenanting with God and with the Church is needless. That Persons not Qualified for Communion in special Ordinances shall Elect Pastors of Churches. That all Professed Christians have right to Baptism. That Brethren are to have no Voice in Ecclesiastical Councils. That the Essence of a Ministers call is not in the Election of the People, but in the Ceremony of Imposing hands. That Persons may be Established in the Pastoral Office without the Approbation of Neighbouring Churches or Elders*; We then give away *the whole Congregational cause* at once, and a great part of the *Presbyterian Discipline* also. To begin a change in one of these Particulars without *Decision* of a *Synod*, would in other Churches of the *Reformed* be counted *Presumption*; but to design all or most of these *Innovations* at once, is certainly a *bold Attempt*. No longer since then *May* 27 1697. no less then Thirty Ministers in this *Province*, did declare and subscribe it with their hands, *That they were made sensible of the tendencies which there are amongst us towards Deviations from*

from the good Order wherein our Churches have according to the Word of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, been happily eſtabliſhed and continued. There is cauſe to be ſenſible of it now as much as then. For *Deviations* are not leſs then formerly, but rather growing upon us every day. Shall we then by ſilence betray the Truth? When the intereſt of Chriſt is concerned; do we not hear that voice, *Who is on the Lords Side? Who?* Is there no one that will ſtand up for the Churches of Chriſt? The Good People in them may then well think that their *Watchmen* are all either Dead or Aſleep: For which cauſe it is, that *I Dedicate* this enſuing *Diſſertation* unto you *the Churches of Chriſt* in *New-England.*

My Brethren, and the Lords People.

It is not *my own Cauſe*, but *Yours*, which I have here undertaken and plead for. Did I ſay *Yours*? Nay, it is *Chriſts Cauſe.* The defence of theſe Truths is now become *the Cauſe of Chriſt and of his Churches in New-England.* I am alſo very ſenſible that *Young Divines*, who have not Studied theſe *Controverſies*, are apt to think, that what has been *Ordinarily profeſſed and practiſed in the Churches of New England*, is *Novelty and Singularity.* It may in that reſpect be a Service to the Churches that ſomething be written, which may be for the Information and Illumination of ſuch, in *Queſtions* of this nature, by

by means whereof they may be the more fit to Serve the *Churches of God* wherever the Divine Providence shall see good to dispose of them.

New-England (I mean the Churches in it) was *Planted a Noble Vine wholly a righ seed.* We are all concerned in our several Capacities (Ministers in theirs and People in theirs) to Labour what in us lies, that they who shall come after us, may not prove *Degenerate Plants*; much more should we Endeavour that they may not be so in our Dayes. It is a sad Observation often Verified by Experience, That *Religion in the Purity and Power of it, seldome continues long in the same place.* When the *Church of Israel* was in a Setled State, *They Served the Lord all the dayes of Joshua, and of the Elders that out lived Joshua; that Generation was gathered to their Fathers, and there arose another Generation after them which knew not the Lord. They turned quickly out of the way which their Fathers walked in, obeying the Voice of the Lord, but they did not so.* It was the *Third Generation* of Church Members which proved Degenerate and Apostate: Pray God it be not so in *New-England.* The *First Generation* of his Servants whom he brought into this Wilderness are gathered to their Fathers: And many of the *Second Generation*, such of them as are yet living are now in years, and soon will be all gone. The *Third Generation* are coming to take their turn.

Some

Some of them are great Blessings to the Churches, as inheriting the Principles, Spirit, and Grace of their Fathers and Grand-Fathers, but many of them do not so. On which account, it is not at all to be wondred at, if they Dislike *the Good Old way of the Churches*; yea, if they Scoff at it, as some of them do; or if they are willing *to depart from what is Ordinarily Practised in the Churches of Christ in New-England.* For *the Congregational Church Discipline*, is not Suited for a Worldly Interest, or for a *Formal Generation* of Professors. It will stand or fall as *Godliness in the Power of it* does prevail or otherwise. That there is a great decay of the Power of Religion throughout all *New England* is Lamentably true. If that revive, there will be no fear of *Departing* from the Holy Discipline of the Churches of Christ. But revived it will be amongst those who are Enemies to *Explicit Covenanting* with God and His People, against whom the *Religious Societies of the Church of England Communion*, now in *London*, will rise up and Condemn them. Was it ever known that *Collapsed Churches* were restored to their Primitive State of Purity, but in this way, and by this means of *Explicit Renovation* of their Covenants with God and with one another. But I hope enough is said about that in the Subsequent *Disquisition.*

Let the Churches Pray for the *Colledge* particularly, that God may ever Bless that Society with faithful *Tutors* that will be true to Christs

Interest

Interest and theirs, and not Hanker after new and loose wayes. This is a matter of no small concernment. For if the Fountain whose *Streams should make glad the City of God*, be corrupted, Posterity will be Endangered thereby. The poor Churches in *Bohemia* before mentioned found it so. If the begun *Apostacy* should proceed as fast the next thirty years as it has done these last, surely it will come to that in *New-England* (Except the Gospel it self *Depart* with the *Order* of it) that the most Conscientious People therein, will think themselves concerned to gather Churches out of Churches. But as yet the *Declension* is not gone so far but a Stop may be put thereunto, and the Interest of Religion be Retrieved. It was said to one of the decaying Churches in *Asia*, *Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, and are ready to Dy*; --- *Remember how thou hast received, and heard, and hold fast.* Do's not the Lord Jesus Christ say so to the Churches in *New-England*? And does He not say, as unto another of the Churches, *Hold fast that thou hast, that no man take thy Crown.*

The Lord give us Grace so to do, which is the hearts desire and Prayer, of him who is,

Yours to Serve you,

Increase Mather.

Boston. 1m. 1700.

THE Order of the Churches in New-England. VINDICATED.

QUESTION I.

Whether Particular Churches ought to Consist of Saints and true Believers on Christ?

The Question is not *de facto*, whether there are not true Churches in whom there are many that are not Saints, but *de jure*, whether it ought to be so? and whether that Church is not Guilty of Sin, which dos admit those into their Communion who are not in the Judgment of rational Charity true Believers on Christ. This being premised for the true stating of the *Question*; the Answer is *Affirmative*. And that for these amongst other Reasons.

1. There are Scripture predictions relating to the Times of the New Testament which intimate that *Evangelical Churches* shall consist of *Holy Persons*. It is foretold that the uncircumcised shall not Enter into Gods Holy City *Isai.* 52. 1. That *the high way*, the way into the Church should be *the way of Holiness*. *Isai.* 35. 8. That the people should be *all Righteous, the branch of the Lords planting, the work of his hands that He might be glorified*. *Isai.* 60. 21. That unsanctified persons shall be kept out of the Spiritual Jerusalem, *Rev.* 21. 27.

2. The Scripture informs us that in Churches where the appointment of Christ was observed it has been thus. As in *Ephesus, Corinth, Philippi, Coloss*, the members of the Churches there, were *Saints, Faithful Brethren, Sanctified in Christ Jesus*.

3. A particular instituted Church is the House of God. That particular Church in *Ephesus* is said to be so. 1 *Tim* 3. 15. A (*a*) Learned and Eminent Divine has these Expressions. As (saith he) a vertuous Civil man 'dos not like to have in his House uncivil 'persons, so the most Holy God will not 'allow any to be in his Family, that are 'unholy. As no man can think well to have 'Swine in his House, or Dogs and Swine to 'come to board with the rest of the Family, 'so open Sinners have no allowance from God 'to be in his Household.

4. None

(a) Mr. *Paul Bain on Eph.* 1. *p.* 91, 111.

4. None that were legally unclean might enter into the Jewish Temple, 2 *Chron.* 23. 19. *Act.* 21. 28, 29. Nor Eat of the Passover and other Holy things. *Numb.* 9 6, 10, 11. Now Evangelical Churches are the Lords Temple. 1 *Cor* 3. 16, 17. And 2 *Cor.*6. 16. And they have in them Sacred things, yea the Body and Blood of Christ; and therefore they who are Morally Unclean may not be admitted into them. The Ceremonial Holiness of the Jewish Church was *Typical* of that real Holiness which ought to be in Gospel Churches.

5. When it has been otherwise, the Lord has reproved them that have caused or permitted such abuses; as in the Church at *Corinth*, *Pergamus*, *Thyatira*, which are blamed for their suffering Ungodly persons to be in their Communion. 1 *Cor.* 5. 2, 13. *Rev.* 2. 14, 15, 20. A Scripture which has respect unto the Times of the Gospel severly rebukes those Ministers which shall bring men that are *Uncircumcised in Heart*, (Unregenerate persons) *into the Sanctuary*, into the Church of God, *to Eat the Bread and Drink the Blood* which they that are there partake of; *Ezek.* 44. 7, 9.

6 Nothing can be more fatal to the Interest of Religion, then to Constitute Churches of Unsanctified Members. This made way for the *Antichristian Apostacy*, which has been Subversive to the Interest of Christ and Holiness throughout the greatest part of that which bears the Name of *Christendome*. When

Christianity became the State Religion, whole Provinces at once were made Church Members, upon a bare Profession of Christianity, without any regard to their real Sanctity. And this Corrupting the Church as to the matter of it, was the means of introducing that Corruption in Doctrine, Worship, Order, which soon followed. Of this some of the *Ancients* who lived in *the fourth Century* were very sensible, for we find in their Writings sad complaints about it. If we allow a Degeneracy in our Churches in respect of the matter of them our *Bethels* will soon become *Bethavens*. It is a smart but a true Expression of a Great (*b*) Divine, *That to compose Churches of habitual Sinners, and that either as to Sins of Commission or Sins of Omission, is not to Erect Temples to Christ, but Chappels to the Devil.*

Nor is this Assertion, *That Visible Saints are the matter of a particular Church* a notion peculiar unto *Congregational Men*. Our Brethren of the *Presbyterian Perswasion* say the same thing. Yea, *the good old Non-conformists*, and all that have been Studious of *Reformation* in the Church concur in this principle. Mr. *Ball* (*c*) who was of the Presbyterian Judgment, sayes, *That all true Churches should consist of Visible Saints. The Non-conformists do acknowledge*

(b) *Dr.* Owen *of a Gospel Church: part* 2. *p.* 4.

(c) *Answer to Cann. part* 2. *p.* 49, 50.

ledge that Churches planted and gathered according to Gods Word consists of Saints only. Thus Mr. *Ball.* The Presbyterians of the Union in *London* have it for one of their Articles, *That none shall be Admitted as Members in order to Communion in all the special Ordinances of the Gospel, but such persons as are Knowing & Sound in the Fundamental Doctrines of the Christi an Religion, without Scandal in their Lives, and to a Judgment regulated by the word of God, are persons of Visible Godliness and Honesty, credibly professing cordial Subjection to Jesus Christ.* Worthy Mr. *Rutherford* has these words, (†) *Those only* (says he) *are to be admitted to the Supper of the Lord, whom in Charity, we Judge, can and do Try and Examine themselves, and rightly discern the Lords Body, and who in Faith can annuatiate the Lords Death.* The Churhes in *New-England* are free to admit those into their Communion who are thus qualified: Nor do they insist on more.

(†) *Plea for the Presbytery in* Scotland. *p.* 184.

QUESTION. II.

Whether there ought not to be a Tryal of persons concerning their Qualifications and Fitness for Church Communion before they are Admitted thereunto?

The Answer may be given in three Assertions.

1. We Affirm that Examination and Tryal of the persons who offer themselves to our Sacred Communion whether they are duely qualified for it, is ordinarily necessary.

For,

1. If men professing and pretending to be Apostles were to be tryed whether they were so indeed or no, then there is the like reason that men pretending to be Saints, and so fit materials for Church Fellowship, should be tryed whether they be so or no. But the former is plain from *Rev* 2. 2. Where such persons were tryed and found to be but Counterfeits.

2. In the Old Testament there were persons set at the Gates of the Temple to see who they were that did Essay to enter, and to keep those out that were not duely qualified. 2 *Chron.* 23. 19. And shall the New Testament Temple, *i. e.* the Church of God, have no persons to Examine such as would enter thereinto? If Ceremonial uncleanness made men unfit to enter into the Material Temple, Moral Uncleanness renders them uncapable of Admission into the Spiritual Temple. Wherefore an Examination is necessary.

3. It is said of the *Mystical Jerusalem*, that Twelve Angels were at her Gates, *Rev* 21. 12. Which does not obscurely intimate, that there are Officers in the Christian Churches whose work it is to observe who they are that Essay to enter thereinto, that so the worthy

worthy or duely qualified may be admitted and others be debarred from Enterance.

2. The tryal to be uſed ſhould be ſuch as may make it appear to the Judgement of rational Charity, that the peſons be ſo qualified as all Church Members ought to be. It has been proved that *Church Members* ought to be *Believers, Saints, Regenerate* perſons. And therefore the Church ſhould put the perſons who deſire Admiſſion into their Holy Communion, to declare and ſhow whether it be thus with them, whether they have truly Repented of their Sins, and whether they truly Believe on Chriſt. Thus we read that *Philip* Examined the Eunuch whether he did believe on Chriſt with all his Heart or no. *Act.* 8. 37. And *John Baptiſt* put thoſe whom he admitted to his Baptiſm to maniſeſt their unfeigned Repentance. *Matth.* 3. 2.

Nevertheleſs,

3. A rigid Severity in Examination is to be avoided, and ſuch tenderneſs and Charity ought to be uſed as that the weakeſt Chriſtians if Sincere may be encouraged and gladly admitted. Yea, it were better (as Mr. *Cotton* (*d*) obſerves) to admit diverſe Hypocrites then to keep out one Sincere Child of God from coming into the Church.

For,

1. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt would not break the bruiſed Reed nor quench the Smoaking flax. *Matth.* 12. 20. But gather the tender Lambs in

(*d*) *In the way of the Churches. p.* 58.

in his arms, and carry them gently in his bosome. *Isa.* 40. 11.

2. Such as are weak in the Faith we are Expresly Commanded to receive. *Rom.* 14 1. Receiving into Church fellowship may well (amongst other things) be comprehended in that Expression.

3. Weak Christians if Sincere have the Substance of that Faith and Sanctity which is necessarily required in Church Members; and therefore no reason they should be Excluded, though others may Exceed them in measure and degree of Knowledge and Grace.

4. Church Communion and the Ordinances of God belonging thereto, being of special use for Confirmation and growth in Grace, such Christians that are the weakest have the most need thereof, and therefore by no means should be Excluded therefrom. These Rules being observed, we affirm that Examination of persons to be admitted into Communion at the Lords Table is necessary. More Arguments for it may be seen in Mr. *Cottons* Excellent Treatise of the *Holiness of Church Members.* And in this Controversy those of the *Presbyterian* perswasion agree with the *Congregational*, as we see in their *Vindication of the Presbyterial Government* published by the Ministers at *London* in the year 1650. Wherein what we assert is largly proved by many Reasons, and the usual Objections against it, are solidly answered. In the primitive Times they were very strict in Examining those

who

who were admitted into Church Fellowship. The great *Chamier* wisheth that the like strictness were used in these dayes. *Origen* against *Celsus* (Lib 3. p. Mihi 142, 147, 148.) sayes, that in those dayes, *Christians did initiate none but Converted ones in their Mysteries, and that they did all that possibly they could do, that their Churches might consist of none but such as were endued with Spiritual Wisdom, and that therefore they that joyned to them submitted to severe Examinations.* This principle, *That ungodly persons are not fit to be admitted to the Lords Table*, was asserted in the first dawnings of the *Reformation*. Not only such as fell in with the *Geneva Discipline*, but the *First Reformers* in the *Church of England* went thus far. The Twenty nineth Article sayes, *That in the use of the Lords Supper, such as are void of a Lively Faith, to their Condemnation Eat and Drink the Sign and Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ.* The *Liturgy* sayes, *That in no wise men should come but in the Marriage Garment. That if any man be in Malice, or in any grievious Crime, Let him not come to the Holy Table, but let him Repent truely of his Sins past, and have a lively Faith in our Saviour Christ.* Such Expressions as these are in the *English Liturgy*. A. B. *Cranmer* in his Answer to the Fifteenth *Articles* of the Devonshire Rebels, having quoted many old *Canons* which require the people to Communicate and not the Priest alone, has these words, *I would Exhort every Good Christian*

Christian man often to receive the Holy Communion: yet I do not recite all these things to the intent that I would in this Corrupt World where men live so ungodly as they do, that the old Canons should be restored again, which Command every man present to receive the Communion with the Priest ; which Canons if they were now used, I fear that men would receive it unworthily. See the *Appendix* to *Cranmers* Life lately published by Mr. *Strype p.* 96. As for that objection that the *Sacrament* is a *Converting Ordinance*, and therefore that there is no need of Examining men about their Conversion in order to their being admitted to partake thereof, it is a Popish Assertion, Condemned and Confuted by our Divines, Excepting that some of the Grossest *Lutherans* have Espoused it. Diverse of our late Writers of the Presbyterian Judgment have Elaborately and Abundantly refuted that pernicious Error. Mr. *Vines* calls this Opinion an *Upstart* Notion : And sayes, *He wonders that any should stand up in the defence of it since there is an army to a man against them.* See his Treatise of the Lords Supper. *p.* 215. Mr *Gillespy* in his *Aarons Rod Blossoming*. Book 3. 12, 13 and 14. Chapters, does not only Answer Mr *Prins* Allegations for the Affirmative, but he has by no less than Twenty Arguments with great Learning and Judgement demonstrated, that the Sacrament of the Supper is not a Converting but a Confirming Ordinance : otherwise it might be Administred

miniſtred not only to Ungodly but to Unbaptiſed perſons. An Ordinance appointed for Converſion is not to be with-held from Unbaptiſed perſons: But the Lords Supper is to be with-held from Unbaptiſed perſons. *Exod.* 12. 48. Therefore &c.

QUESTION. III.

WHether are not the Brethren, and not the Elders of the Church only to Judge concerning the Qualifications and Fitneſs of thoſe who are Admitted into their Communion?

Anſw. There is ſome difference of Apprehenſion, and yet no breach of Amity or *Union*, as to this *Queſtion* between the Brethren of the Presbyterian and the Congregational way, the former giving this power only to the *Elderſhip*, the later joyning the *Fraternity* with them. (e) Mr. *Cotton*, and from him Mr. *Norton* has Judiciouſly ſtated and diſcuſſed this Controverſy. Let their and ſome other Arguments be duely weighed in the Ballance of the Sanctuary.

1. They that have power in Admiſſion have power to Judge whether the perſons to be Admitted are duely qualified for Admiſſion. But this is true of the *Fraternity* as well as of the *Presbytery*. No one can be Admitted into

(e) *In Reſp. ad Apollon. p.* 13.

into the Church by the Elders without the Consent of the Brethren. The Community is concerned in who are Admitted, and therefore should concur therein. Its a received maxim, *Quod tangit omnes, debet ab omnibus approbari.* And reason sayes, They that have power to Admit have power to Judge whether the persons who desire it, are fit for that Admittance.

2. They that have power to Judge whether a person is fit to be cast out of Communion, have power to Judge whether he is fit to be received into Communion. *The Key* [the power] *of Opening and Shutting* belongs to the same persons. But it is clear from the Scripture, that the Brethren and not the Elders only have power to Judge whether an Offender is fit to be Excommunicated. *Matth.* 18. 17. 1 *Cor.* 5. 12. All Orthodox Divines agree that Church Discipline should be Exercised, *Consentiente plebe.* So amongst the Ancients, *Cyprian, Ambrose, Austin, Ierom, Chrysostom, Nazianzene, Theodoret, Theophylact.* And amongst our Modren Divines, *Calvin, Beza, Bullinger, Melancton, Junius, Pareus, Rivet, Trelcatius.* If their consent is necessary, than they have power to Judge whether they ought to consent or no.

3 They that have power to Judge whether a person Excommunicated, is fit to be restored to the Communion of the Church, have power to Judge whether persons never yet received into the Communion of the Church are duely qualifi d

qualified for that Communion. But the Apoſtle writes to *the Brethren* as well as to *the Elders* of the Church in *Corinth* to reſtore a penitent, whom they had according to the diſcipline of Chriſt laid under a Church cenſure, 2 *Cor.* 2. 6. If the Brethren are competent Judges concerning the Repentance of a Lapſed Communicant, they are not incompetent Judges of the Repentance of other perſons that may offer themſelves to their Communion.

4. When *Saul* deſired to joyn to the Church at *Jeruſalem*, he was not admitted until the Brethren were by the *Teſtimony* of *Barnabas*, together with his own *Declaration*, ſatisfyed concerning the reality of his Faith and Repentance. *Act* 9 26, 27.

5. If only Elders have power to Judge who are fit to come to the Sacrament or to joyn to the Churches, then in caſe there is but one Elder in a Church (as there are very few Churches in *New-England* that have more Elders than one) the Sole power will reſide in that one mans hands. Then by a parity of reaſon one alone would have power to ſuſpend from Communion, which Judicious Presbyterians do not allow of. For the *London* Miniſters in their Vindication of the Preſbyterian Government, (*p* 70,71.) have theſe words. 'It is (ſay they) as warrantable by 'the word of God, for one Miniſter to aſſume 'unto himſelf alone the power of Suſpending 'from the Sacrament, as it is to aſſume the

'whole power of admitting to the Sacrament, 'for *contrariorum eadem est ratio*: For one 'Minister alone to assume this power to him-'self, is to make himself a Congregational 'Pope. It is a bringing into the Church a 'power that would have some resemblance 'to Auricular Confession. Thus said the Presbyterians Fifty years ago.

6. The way to keep Popery out of the World, is for the *Fraternity* in Churches to assert and maintain that power and privi-ledge, which does of right belong unto them. Certain it is, that in the first Ages of Christi-anity this power which we plead for, was not taken out of the hands of the Brother-hood. One of the Ancients, whose writings give us the greatest in-sight, into what was the gene-ral practice of the Churches, in the *Third Century* makes this past dispute. In (*f*) one of his Epistles he has these words, *Examina-buntur Singula præsentibus et judicantibus vobis.* And in another, *Vix plebi persuadeo ut tales patiantur admitti.* That he had much adoe to perswade the people to be satisfied with the Repentance and Qualifications of some that desired a Reception or Restoration to their Communion. When in after times Church Members thought with themselves, our Ministers understand Church Affairs better than we do, therefore we will unconcern our selves, and leave all to their *Conscience and Prudence*: this very thing (as some Learned men have observed) was that which made way for the

(*f*) *Cyprian. Epist* 40. rise

riſe of Popery. It may be it will be for the Edification of ſome Readers, if we recite ſome paſſages out of our famous Dr. *Owen*, in his Judicious (g) Treatiſe of Evangelical Churches. He has theſe words. 'Dr. *Stillingfleet* denyes 'unto the people all Liberty or Ability to 'chuſe their own Paſtors, to judge what is 'meet for their own Edification, what is Hereſy, 'or a pernicious Error, and what is not, or 'any thing of the like nature. This is al-'moſt the ſame with that of the Phariſees, 'concerning them who admired and followed 'the Doctrine of our Saviour, *Joh.* 7. 49. '*This people which know not the Law*: yet was 'it *this People*, whom the Apoſtle directed to 'chooſe out from among themſelves perſons 'meet for an Evangelical Office. *Act.* 6. *The* '*ſame People* who joined with the Apoſtles 'and Elders in the conſideration of the 'Grand caſe concerning the continuation of 'the Legal Ceremonies, and were Aſſociates 'with them in the determination of it. *Act.* 15. 'The *ſame* to whom all the Apoſtolical E-'piſtles, Excepting ſome to particular perſons, 'were written. And unto whom ſuch di-'rections were given and duties Enjoyned in 'them, as ſuppoſe not only Liberty and A-'bility to judge for themſelves in all matters 'of Faith and Obedience, but alſo an eſpecial 'Intereſt in the Order and Diſcipline of the 'Church, thoſe who were to ſay to *Archip-*

(g) *Part* 1. *page* 295, 296.

'pus their Bishop, *take heed to the Ministry* 'which thou hast received in the Lord that thou 'fulfill it. *Col* 4. 17. Unto whom of all sorts 'it is Commanded that they should Examine 'and *Try Antichrists, Spirits, and false Teachers*, 'that is all sorts of Hereticks, Heresies, and 'Errors. 1 *Joh. chap.* 2. 3. &c That people 'who even in following Ages adhered unto 'the Faith and the Orthodox profession of it, 'when almost all the Bishops were became 'Arian Hereticks. This principle of the Re-'formation in Vindication of the Rights, Li-'berties and Priviledges of the Christian Peo-'ple to judge and choose for themselves in 'matters of Religion, to joyn freely in those 'Church Duties which are required of them, 'without which the work of it had never been 'carryed on, we do abide by and maintain. 'Yea, we meet with no Opposition more 'fierce then upon the account of our asserting 'the Liberties and Rights of the People in 'reference unto Church Order and Worship. 'But I shall not be afraid to say, that as the 'Reformation was begun and carryed on, on 'this principle: So when *this People* shall 'through an apprehension of their Ignorance, 'Weakness, and *Unmeetness to judge* in mat-'ters of Religion, for themselves, and their own 'duty, be kept and debarred from it; or 'when through their own sloath, negligence, 'and viciousness they shall be really uncapa-'ble to manage their own Interest in Church 'Affairs, as being fit only to be Governed

'if

'if not as *Brute* Creatures, yet as *Mute* per-
'sons and that these things are improved by
'the Ambition of *the Clergy ingrossing all things*
'*in the Church to themselves*, as they did in
'former Ages, if the *Old Popedome* do not
'return, a *New one* will be Erected as bad as
'the other. Thus far Dr. *Owen*.

QUESTION. IV.

WHether is it necessary that persons at their Admission into the Church, should make a publick Relation of the Time and Manner of their Conversion?

Answ. 1. As the *Question* is worded, the Answer must be *Negative*. Nor do the Churches of *New England* impose this: nor ought this to be required or desired of every one that joyns to our Communion:

For,

1. Some truly Converted ones know neither the Time nor the Manner of their Conversion. It is often so with those that have been Advantaged with a Religious Education, and that have been all their dayes kept from falling into Scandalous Sins. The Spirit of God changeth their Hearts gradually and insensibly, as Mr. *Hooker* and other practical Divines have shewen. I have (*h*) else-where noted

C 3 what

(h) *In the preface to Mr.* Mitchels *Life.*

what Mr. *Baxter* relates concerning a considerable number of Eminent Christians who being met together on other accounts, it was proposed whether they could all give an account of the Exact Time of their Conversion; and there was but one of them all that could do it.

2. The natural Tempers and Infirmities of some are such as make them uncapable of relating publickly what God has done for them. Some have a natural Hesitancy of Speech. Others are of very bashful Tempers. Others are of such weak Intellectuals as that they can Scarce speak sence. To put such upon *Publick Declarations* of their Experiences, would be to expose Sacred things to be Contemned and Ridiculed by men of profane Spirits.

3. It is possible that the Occasion of a mans Conversion may have been something not fit to be publickly related. It may be the words of some persecuted Saint who is in obscurity. It may be some signal Judgment on some of his Relations: Nay, it may be some Secret Sin which himself has been guilty of, may have so wounded his Conscience as to occasion his true Repentance for all his other Sins: but this he ought not to tell the World of.

4. I am the more slow to pronounce the practice in Question to be *Absolutely necessary*, for that, Good and wise men have not been satisfyed

ſatisfyed neither with the neceſſity nor yet with the Expediency of it. True it is, that the reaſon of that Oppoſition againſt it which is in the minds of ſome, proceeds from their own want of Experience. The *American Apoſtle*, (as Mr. *Baxter* calls him) good old Mr. *Eliot*, who was very Zealous for publick Relations, has ſometimes told us of a man that Joyned himſelf to the Church in *Roxbury*, who had been a very bitter Enemy to this Holy practice of the Churches in *New-England*, until the Lord changed his Heart: And then when he offered himſelf to the Communion of the Church, he began his publick Relation after this manner. *It may be it will be wondred at that I who have been ſuch an Enemy to theſe Relations, and have ſo often inveighed againſt that practice of the Churches, ſhould now be willing my ſelf to Relate what impreſſions the Word and Spirit of God has made upon me. I muſt Confeſs, that when I was againſt that Practice, the true reaſon was becauſe* I had nothing to ſay; *but it has pleaſed the Lord to Open my eyes, and to Change my heart: and now I am willing to Declare unto all you that fear the Lord, what God has done for my Soul.* After this manner did that Converted man Expreſs himſelf. Yet nevertheleſs, ſome who have had Experience of the Regenerating Grace of God in their own Souls, have not thought it neceſſary, to declare this Publickly, when they Joyn in Church-fellowſhip. I remember my Worthy Friend and

and Ancient acquaintance, the Reverend and Learned Mr. *John How* (who was Paſtor of a Congregational Church in great *Torrington* in *Devonſhire*, where I was his Succeſſor in the work of the Miniſtry forty years agoe) informed me of one in that Church, who had been very averſe to make a Relation of his Experiences, as ſuppoſing there was no Rule in Scripture obliging all that joyned to the Church ſo to practice : But at laſt he yielded to the Importunity of them that deſired it from him ; and made ſuch a Relation of the work of God on his Soul, that (as Mr. *How* aſſured me) there was not one man in all the Church that had dry Eyes at the hearing of it. Theſe things conſidered, we ſhall readily concede unto thoſe who are Scrupulous about Relations, that *A Formal Relation is not abſolutely neceſſary* in order to Admiſſion into Church Fellowſhip.

Nevertheleſs,

Anſw. 2. The practice of the Churches in *New England* as to this particular, is Lawful, Laudable, and Edifying. It is Lawful for Churches to deſire thoſe that offer themſelves to their Holy Fellowſhip, to give an account of their Faith and Repentance : And when a Church deſires it, no capable perſon ought to refuſe it. For,

1. There is Scripture warrant for this practice. *David* ſayes, *I have not hid thy Righteouſneſs within my heart, I have declared thy Faithfulneſs and thy Salvation, I have not concealed thy loving*

loving kindneſs and thy Truth from the great Congregation. Pſal 40 10. And in another place, he ſayes, *Come and hear all you that fear God, and I will declare what he has done for my Soul. Pſal* 66 16. Theſe Expreſſions ſhow that a Chriſtian ſhould be willing upon juſt occaſion, to declare the Goodneſs and Gracious workings of God upon his Soul, and this too in the Aſſembly and Congregation of his People. Now if a Church does deſire it, thats a juſt occaſion for the doing of it: and therefore it then ought to be done. Moreover, the Scripture ſayes, that Chriſtians ſhould be *ready to give a reaſon of the hope that is in them to every one that asketh. 1 Pet* 3.15. This Expreſſion of *A reaſon of their hope* ſhews that they muſt not only declare what good things they hoped for in this or in another world, but alſo upon what grounds they did ſo hope. For elſe they might ſhew their hope, but not *the Reaſon* of their hope. Now if a man has Experienced a work of Saving Converſion, cauſing him to accept of Chriſt on the terms of the Goſpel, he has ſufficient Ground and *Reaſon* for Hope. *Eph.* 1. 18. *Heb.* 11. 1. But without that he has no reaſon to hope but the contrary. *Eph.* 2. 12. Therefore he that declares the reaſon of his hope, muſt declare his Faith and Regeneration. If the Apoſtle does ſpecially intend that Chriſtians ſhould be ready to do this before Perſecutors, who would probably be offended with them for

it,

it, ſurely they ſhould be ready to do this before a Church of Chriſt who will not be offended with them, but bleſs God for what they ſhall hear. The Presbyterian (i) Miniſters of *London* ſay well, whoſe words are theſe, *If Chriſtians are bound to give an account of their Faith and Hope to every one that asketh, yea even to Heathen Perſecutors, how much more ought they to do it to the Officers of the Church? eſpecially at ſuch a Time when they deſire to be admitted to ſuch an Ordinance as is not common to all ſorts of Chriſtians.* I add, And how much more to a whole Church of Chriſt, if they ask it? There are alſo Scripture Examples to encourage this Holy practice. They who were admitted to *Johns Baptiſm*, made an *Open Declaration* of their Converſion. *Math* 3. 6. And thoſe Converts in *Act.* 2. did manifeſt that ſerious deſires were wrought in their Souls to be delivered from their Sins, which lay upon their Conſciences and pricked their hearts, and that they gladly received the word of promiſe. If this was publickly manifeſted by them before their Admittance to Baptiſm; why ſhould not the like be done now by Chriſtians before their Admiſſion to the Lords Table? It is alſo recorded concerning the Converted *Epheſians*, that they not only believed, but *Came and Confeſſed. Act.* 19. 18. which implyes *A Publick Declaration of their Converſion.*

And

(i) *Vindication of Presbyterian Government p.* 67.

And we find that the Apoſtle *Paul* was ready upon all juſt occaſions to relate the ſtory of his Converſion. This does warrant Chriſtians now to practice the like on juſt occaſions. And conſequently when a Church of Chriſt ſhall call for it. The great *Auſtin* in his Book of Confeſſions, relates the ſtory of his Converſion: The like we find in the publiſhed lives of many Saints. *Juſtin Martyr* in his diſputation with *Tryphon* the Jew giveth a Marvellous account of his Converſion, by means of a Reverend old man, that adviſed him to Read the Scriptures and to pray to God for illumination, and then departed out of his ſight.

2. It is neceſſary that Churches ſhould know that thoſe whom they admit to their Communion are duely qualified for that Communion. That they have in them (ſo far as men are able to judge) that which is the matter of Self-Examination, *viz.* *Faith* and *Repentance*. That they have an ability to Examine themſelves, and not only Doctrinally but Spiritually *to diſcern the Lords Body*. 1 *Cor.* 11. 28, 29. Now one way for the Church to know that they are ſuch, is, by a *Relation of Experiences*. Nor can it be known except by a *Relation*, or that which ſhall be *Equivalent* thereunto; as our worthy (k) Mr. *Mitchel* has Evinced.

3. This practice of our Churches has a tendency to promote *Godlineſs in the Power*

of

(k) *See his Life, p.* 84.

of it. I bless the Lord, in that there are at this day in *London*, several *Religious Societies* of the *Communion of the Church of England*, whose design is to promote Religion in the Power of it. Now these Societies require of such as joyn to them, that they *give the Society a Solemn account of their sence of Spiritual things*, which they do sometimes Orally and sometimes in Writing. One that has perused some of their Papers, Reports that they have in them such Pious and sensible Expressions as would mightily affect any Pious Person to read them. But of this I have made a more large Recitation in a lately (*l*) published *Epistle*. Now since this practice has a tendency to promote Godliness, why should it not be continued in our Churches? If the *Reformers in the Church of England*, require a Solemn account of their sence of Spiritual things of those that are Admitted into their *Religious Societies*, why may not we require the like of them that joyn to our Churches, which are *Religious Societies*?

4. This practice has been and will be attended with blessed effects.

For,

1. It will cause the Name of God to be glorified. The Church that Heareth a Savoury *Relation* from any that present themselves to their Communion, will praise God for his Grace in them. *Gal.* 1. 24.

2. The

(*l*) *See my Epistle before Mr.* Willards *Sermons on 2 Tim.* 3 3.

2. The Lords people will have Joy and Comfort in ſuch Members being added to them. If *Paul* and *Barnabas* did cauſe great joy to the Brethren *by declaring the Converſion of others. Act* 15 3. That Chriſtian will cauſe great joy to a whole Church of Chriſt, that ſhall *Relate* to them, the Experience which he has had of the Grace of God in his own Converſion. It is good to be a helper and not an hinderer of the joy of Saints. 2 *Cor.* 1. 24.

3. The perſon that does thus joyn himſelf to the Lords People will have more of their Love and Affection than could otherwiſe be expected. When they perceive what Experience he has had of the Converting Grace of God in his Soul, every one that is Godly will Love him, and their Hearts will be United to him. 1 *Joh.* 5. 1. I Appeal to the Children of God if they do not find it thus. If when they hear any perſons make a very Experimental Relation of Gods dealings with them, in Convincing them of their miſery by Nature, and bringing them to caſt themſelves upon Chriſt, and helping them againſt ſpecial Temptations, they do not find in their hearts a Singular Love and Holy Affection towards ſuch perſons ever after that day. From ſuch Conſiderations as theſe mentioned, the practice of the Churches of *New-England* reſpecting the matter in Queſtion is to be Juſtifyed, and I pray God, that it may be with due Solemnity continued. That ſome

of our Presbyterian Brethren require that which is equivalent to what is with us called a *Publick Relation*, of those whom they admit to the Lords Supper, is to be seen by a Discourse, called, *The Young mans claim to the Sacrament*, Written by my worthy Friend Mr. *John Quick*, a Reverend Minister now in *London*. I shall only add, that care is to be taken, Lest this custom of the Churches *degenerate into a meer Formality*. Not only things in themselves Lawful and Good, but the Holy Institutions of Christ, have through the Malice of Satan and the Corruptions of men, been turned into *Formalities*. So are Church-officers, Sacraments, and Church censures in the *Church of Rome*, and in some Protestant Churches also; which are not throughly cleansed from the Romish Superstitions. Our *Customary Relations* may and will be so too, if we be not careful to prevent it. Insipid, Sapless *Relations* which are used only *Proforma*, will not Edify; but give Scandal, and Prejudice many against this Laudable Practice. There are Reports, as if in some Churches, Persons have brought *written Relations* first to the Minister, and then to the Church, which were not of their own dictating, but devised by others for them. I hope these Reports have nothing of Truth in them, but if they have, I am sure that such *Lyars to the Holy Ghost*, have Exceedingly provoked the Lord.

QUES-

QUESTION. V.

HAS the Church Covenant as Commonly practiſed in the Churches of New-England, any Scripture Foundation?

Anſw. This *Queſtion* was Conſidered at a General Convention of Miniſters at *Boſton*, *May* 26. 1698. And all the Miniſters then preſent (one only excepted) did Concur in the *Affirmative*. The Reaſons to prove that this Practice of our Churches is not an humane Invention, but grounded on the Word of God, are ſuch as theſe.

1. Nothing is more Indiſputable then that under the Old Teſtament, the Church was Conſtituted by a Covenant. Nor was any Proſelyte admitted into that Church, but by laying hold of the Covenant. A Proſelyte was *Filius fœderis* a *Son of the Covenant*. The Jews were *Unchurched* by being *Diſcovenanted*. *Zech.* 11 10. Things abundantly inſiſted on in the Old Teſtament, are more ſparingly mentioned in the New. Such as the Sanctification of the Sabbath, and the Church State of the Infant Children of the Lords People. The like may be ſaid as to the Church Covenant. Several Eminent Divines have given this reaſon why the Word *Covenant* is not mentioned by the Apoſtles, when they ſpeak of particular Churches. *viz.* Becauſe it is founded

on moral Equity, and often mentioned in the Old Testament. Moreover (as is noted by a Learned Author) the name *Covenant* and *Covenanting*, was that which would have made the Churches in those dayes Obnoxious to the Civil Powers, who were then Enemies to Christianity. Therefore the Apostles did forbear the *Names*, but Established the *Thing* by Similitudes evidently implying it.

2. Scriptures which relate to Gospel Times, intimate such a Covenant as is used in our Churches. *Isa.* 62. 5. 'Tis said of the Churhes, *Thy Sons shall Marry thee*, which implies a Covenant. Thus *Isa* 44. 5 *One shall say I am the Lords, and another shall Subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and Surname himself by the name of Israel.* This is Explicit Covenanting, to be in Gospel Times. So *Isa* 56 4. *They that chuse the things that please me, and take hold of my Covenant.*

3. Members in particular Evangelical Churches are said to be *Fellow Citizens. Eph.* 2. 19. Now there is no Admission into *jus Civitatis*, or City priviledges, but by an Act which implies a Covenant. Citizens are in a Covenant together to keep the Laws, and maintain the Liberty of the City.

4. A Church when *Collapsed*, is restored by a *Renovation* of their Church *Covenant* with God, and with one another: Of which we have Instances in the Scripture. 2 *Chron.* 23. 16. and 29. 9, 10. and 34. 31, 32. *Ezra.* 10.

10. 3, 5. *Nehe.* 10.29. Now there is the ſame reaſon of *Reſtitution*, as of *Inſtitution*.

5. Nothing elſe can be mentioned as Conſtituting a Particular Church, but only a *Covenant*, *Agreement*, or *Conſent* to walk with God and one another according to the Rules of the Goſpel. Meer *Cohabitation* does not make a Church Member, for then Jews and Pagans would be Members of Evangelical Churches. Nor does Profeſſion do it, for then it would be impoſſible to cut off Scandalous Members by *Excommunication*. Nor *Baptiſm*: For then upon the ceaſing of Membership in a Particular Church, a man muſt be rebap iſed

6 There are Scriptures in the New-Teſtament which imply ſuch a Covenant, as that which we plead for. *Act* 2. 42. *They Continued*, The Greek word ſignifies, *They joyned and Cleaved together*. So *Act.* 5. 13. None durſt *Joyn themſelves*, *i. e.* give themſelves to the Church; they were afraid of being Married to the Church The word is the ſame with that *Matth.* 19. 6 It is in reſpect of the Covenant (as Dr. *Goodwin* (*m*) obſerves) that they who are Conjugally related, are ſaid to be joyned together.

7. If *Implicit Covenanting* is abſolutely neceſſary to the being of a particular Church, than *Explicit Covenanting* muſt needs be a good thing. The more Explicit men are in Confeſſing Chriſt, and owning his Inſtitutions,

(m) *In his 4th. Volum.*

the more do they Glorify him. *Matth.* 10. 33. *Mark* 8. 39. There is (as Mr. (*n*) *Stone* the famous Teacher of *Hartford* has obſerved) *much of the Viſible Glory of Chriſt appearing in the Explicitneſs of the Church Covenant, when men viſibly bind themſelves and their Children to Chriſt.* That *Explicit Covenanting* was practiſed among Chriſtians in the next ages to the Apoſtles, is Evident from *Pliney* (who lived Anno. 110) his Letter to the Emperor *Trajan.* Having Enquired into what was *Cuſtomary* in *Chriſtian Aſſemblies,* He ſayes that they did meet to Worſhip Chriſt, and that they did *by an Oath* bind themſelves to attend the *Diſcipline,* that they would not allow of Adulteries, Theſts, Lying, or any Evil thing to be among them. We ſee in *Juſtin Martyr,* his *Second Apology* (who lived within fifty Years of ſome of the Apoſtles) that Chriſtians were in thoſe Dayes admitted into Church Fellowſhip, declared their Reſolution in all things to Conform to the Word of God. They did not only profeſs their belief of the Chriſtian Religion, but promiſed to live accordingly. Apol. 2. p. 93, 94. *Tertullian* (*o*) in his *Apology* ſpeaking of *Plinies* Letter but now cited, Expreſſeth the Practice of thoſe Primitive Chriſtians, by ſaying that they met together *ad Conſœderandam Diſciplinam,* which ſhows that they had both a *Diſcipline* and a *Covenant* amongſt them, and clearly Explaines the meaning of *Plinies*

(n) *In his Anſwer to Mr. Hudſon. p.* 41.
(o) *Cap.* 2. *p.* (*Mihi*) 13.

Plinies Sacrament or Oath, which he affirms to be Practiſed in the Chriſtian Aſſemblies. *Commenius* (p) informs us that in the *Bohemian* Churches ſuch as were admitted to full Communion, made a publick profeſſion of their Faith before the whole Church, withall promiſing to live according to the rules of the Goſpel. In the beginning of Queen *Eliz.* Reign, ſeveral Congregations in *England*, particularly thoſe in *Coventry*, and in *Northampton*, did publickly profeſs Repentance for their Idolatry, and *Promiſed* Obedience to the Proteſtant Doctrine then reſtored and eſtabliſhed; which Mr. *Robinſon* in his Anſwer to Mr. *Bernard*, *p.* 464. Suppoſeth to be the deed not of the whole Congregations, but of ſome Miniſters, a few of their people joyning with them. There are ſome who ſay that *Presbyterians* are againſt *Explicit Covenanting*. My deſign is to vindicate them as well as their *Congregational Brethren*. And I muſt therefore ſay, that ſuch an Imputation to them all, is an injurious Reflection. Both the one & the other acknowledge that *Explicit Covenanting* is not *Eſſential* to the being of a *Particular Church*. Nevertheleſs, that it is very uſeful to the *bene eſſe* thereof, for the more effectual Management of Diſcipline, and preſervation of Order in the Churches, which renders it a duty. Dr. *Hornbeck* (a Learned profeſſor in the Univerſity of *Leyden* who has written in Defence of the Pres-

(p) *Hiſtor. p.* 46. *et. in rat. ordin. p.* 43, 46.

Presbyterian Government) (†) declares his approbation of the practice of Congregational Churches as to that of *Explicit* Covenanting, and that he approveth of what Mr. *Cotton*, Mr. *Richard Mather*, and Mr. *Norton*, (all of *New-England*) have publiſhed on that Subject. The Churches in *Holland* are under the Presbyterian form of Government. It is certain that they did many years ſince require *Explicit* Covenanting both with God and with the Church, by thoſe that were admitted into their Communion. *Zepperus* who himſelf was one of them, writes that their manner and order, is, (q) *That when any perſons are admitted to the Lords Table, they make a Publick Profeſſion of their Faith before all the Church, and likewiſe promiſe and Covenant that they will continue in that Faith, and lead their Lives accordingly.* This perſonal Covenanting with God and the Church is required by ſeveral of the *Synods* in *Holland*, and is highly approved of by the moſt Learned *Voetius* in his Books of (r) *Eccleſiaſtical Polity.* An *Epiſcopalian* near upon an hundred years ſince, complained that the *Calviniſts* and Reformed Churches in *France* would not admit any one unto the Lords Table, Except he did make a *Publick Profeſſion of his Faith*, and did alſo *Promiſe by the help of God to continue ſtedfaſt therein.* Our Re-

(†) *In Epiſt. ad Dureum. p.* 309, 310.
(q) *Zepper. de polit. Eccleſ. L.* 1. *c.* 14.
(r) *Part* 1. *Lib.* 1. *c.* 4.

Renowned Mr. *Robert Parker*, (who being driven out of *England* by the then Perſecuting Prelates lived amongſt the Reformed Churches abroad) acquaints us that in thoſe Churches, *When any perſon ſeeks Admittance into Church Communion, the Name of him who deſires to be a Church Member is Publiſhed in the Congregation, that if any one has ought to Object againſt the Perſon Propounded, he ſhould acquaint the Elders therewith. If nothing is brought in againſt him, he is admitted, but not without a Solemn Covenant with God and the Church; and to the Church he promiſeth to walk as becomes that Holy Fellowſhip, that he will ſubmit to the Diſcipline of the Church, that he will Watch over the Brethren of that Communion according to the command of Chriſt.* If (ſaith Mr. *Parker*) (s) this were practiſed in the *Church of England*, there would be no cauſe for *A. B. Whitgift* to ſay, that *the Viſible Church is full of Idolaters, Adulterers, Drunkards, and Atheiſts.* That none were admitted to be Members of Particular Churches amongſt the Reformed in (t) *France* without Publick Covenanting or *Promiſing Subjection to the Diſcipline of Chriſt*, is well known. Now let us hear what a later Presbyterian ſayes about an *Explicit Church Covenant*: The Reverend Mr. *Baxter* in his Book called *Church Concord* (n) declares that there

(s) *De pol. Eccleſ. L.* 3. *c.* 16 *p.* 171, 172.
(t) *See Mr.* Quicks *Synodicon. An.* 1565. *p.* 61.
(n) *P.* 20, 21.

there is no difference at all between the Learned of both perſwaſions. (*Viz.* Presbyterian and Congregational) about this controverſy. *The thing* (ſayes he) *that the Presbyterians have ſtood upon is no more but to Vindicate the Truth of our Churches againſt the Separatiſts, that have denyed them to be true Churches, becauſe they have not an Explicit Covenant. They deny not but that ſuch a Covenant may conduce to the well being of the Church.* And he adds further ; *I conclude that whatſ ever ſome Particular Perſons may be Guilty of, there is no real differance between the Presbyterians and Independants in the point of Church Covenant. God forbid, that any faithful Miniſter of Chriſt ſhould fight againſt that which is profitable to the well-being of the Church, meerly becauſe without it the Church may have a being. Then muſt we plead for hunger and want, and calamitous diſeaſes that leave us but the being of men. Nature, and Scripture, and the Preſidents in the Old Teſtament, and the Doctrine of the Apoſtles, and the Ancient practice of the Churches do ſatisfy us of the uſefulneſs of Holy Covenants, prudently, ſeriouſly, and ſeaſonably made.* Thus Mr. *Baxter* who has much more to the ſame purpoſe in his Book of Confirmation.

QUEST.

QUESTION. VI.

IS Publick Reading of the Scriptures without any Explication or Exhortation therewith, part of the work incumbent on a Miniſter of the Goſpel

Anſw. The Queſtion is not whether ſuch Readings are Lawful, (for who doubts that) but whether the Miniſter that ſhall omit them does fail in that which is ſome part of his duty. To which the Anſwer muſt be *Negative*. It cannot be proved that that which ſome call *Dumb Reading*, or publick Reading of the Scriptures without any Explication or Exhortation is part of the Paſtoral Office, or that which every Miniſter of the Goſpel is bound unto. Some have thought (*w*) that when *Paul* ſayes to *Timothy*, *Till I come give attendance to Reading*, that he means Publick Reading of the Scriptures; but then he adds, *and to Exhortation and Doctrine.* 1 *Tim.* 4. 13. The Reading of one Chapter with a brief Explication, will Edify the Congregation more than the bare Reading of Twenty Chapters will do. And every Miniſter ſhould attend that which will be moſt to the Edification of his People. If publick Reading without Explication or Exhortation therewith is a duty, than thoſe Miniſters who when they Read publickly

(w) *V. Dido. clav. p.* 533. *And* Ainſworth *againſt* Smith. *p.* 44.

ly do alwayes Expound or Exhort therewith, but do not practice that which is called *Dumb Reading*, are guilty of Sin, as omiting that which is their duty. But such Ministers are not guilty of Sin: And if not, it will then follow that they who practice Reading without Explication under the notion of a duty, are guilty of Superstition, in making that a duty which is none. As for *Reading* without *Interpretation*, there are many who can do that as well as the Minister. We find in *Neh.* 8. 8. *That they read in the Book of the Law distinctly, and gave the sence, and caused them to understand the Reading.* That the Jews were wont to Read the Scriptures in their *Synagogues* every Sabbath day, we all know. The *Penteteuch* (or five Books of *Moses*) was by them divided into fifty four *Parashoth*, or *Sections*, which they read over once every year. When *Antiochus* inhibited the Reading of *the Law*, the Jews instead thereof Read *the Prophets*; after which it became customary to *Read both* of them. The Jews called the Lections out of the Prophets, *Haphtharot*, which signifies *Dismission*, because they were wont to dismis their Assemblies with those Readings But that *Explications* and *Exhortations* used to attend their *Readings* is certain. It belonged to him that was the *chief Ruler* of the *Synagogue* to see this done, who did sometimes permit others to do it. The chief man in the *Synagogue* was by the Jews called *Chazzan*, *i. e.* the Inspector, or *Overseer*, and some-

ſometimes they called him *Sheliach Tſibbor, i. e. The Angel of the Congregation.* The work of this perſon was to go before the Congregation in prayer. And although he did ſeldome read himſelf, he appointed others to do it, making his choice of Seven, and diligently obſerved how they read. This *Overſeer of the Synagogue*, or ſome other perſon uſed to *Interpret* what was read. On this very account, the *Synagogue* was called, *Beth Midraſh*, i. e. *The Houſe of Expoſition.* See Mr. *Weems Exercitation.* 15. *p.* 163. Where he ſhows that it was the manner of the Jews after the reading of the Law and the Prophets to Expound. Beſides what Writers on this Subject inform us, the thing is clear from theſe Scriptures. 2 *Chron.* 17 9. *Luk.* 4. 16.---22. *Act.* 13. 15. and 15. 21. It cannot be proved that Reading without *Explication* or *Application* was uſed by the Paſtors in the Churches of Chriſtians in *Apoſtolical* Times, nor yet in the next Ages to them. We ſee in *Juſtin Martyr*, that the Scriptures were then Read, but a Sermon thereon followed. In *Cyprians* (*x*) Time there was a *Reader* diſtinct from the *Presbyter*, who was Ordained to that Office. He is by *Cyprian* called *Doctor Audientium*, (which as the moſt Learned Profeſſor of *Utrick* has obſerved) implies that he did more than barely Read. In *Auſtins* time, they uſed to have *three Lections.* They read an *Epiſtle*, and

(*x*) *V. Cyprian Epiſt.* 24. & 34.

something out of the *Gospel*, and a *Psalm*, after which the Minister Preached upon what was read. Therefore *Austin* begins some of his Sermons with saying, *Tres has Lectiones*, &c. *These three Readings which you have heard* &c. When the distinction of *Libri proto-Canonici et deutero-canonici* was received, the Reading of the Scriptures in Publick Congregations brought in the Reading of *Apochrypha-Books*, (and at last the Reading of *Homilies* instead of Preaching) which is still practised in *Popish*, and in some Protestant Congregations, notwithstanding there is in the *Council* of *Laodicea* a *Canon* against it. From these and the like Considerations *Publick Readings* of the Scriptures unless with some *Exposition* thereon was not practised in the Churches of *New-England* by those Eminent Servants of Christ, who first planted Churches in this Wilderness. Mr. *Rutherford* in his account of the Government of the Church of *Scotland*, under that head of *The Pastors Duty*, (*p.* 314.) mentions reading Scriptures with Exposition, but says nothing of reading without that. I am informed that there are Congregations in *Scotland*, where not the *Pastor*, but the *Ruling Elder* readeth the Scripture. Mr. *Calderwood*, (that Learned Scotch Divine who goes under the name of *Didoclavius*) sayes, that he would not have Sermons without reading the Scriptures: Nor reading without Interpretation. *Non probo Lectionem sine Interpretatione. Altare*

ture Damascan. p. 632. In some (*y*) Congregations in *Germany*, the Scriptures have been read in order, and illustrated with a brief and pious Explication. In the *Tigurin Liturgy*, there is no mention of Reading without Interpretation: I therefore suppose that there is no such practice in the *Helvetian* Churches. I knew an Eminent Minister in *England* who did for many years read the Scriptures in the publick Congregation, without any Explication, but in his latter Time he saw cause to alter his Judgement and practice therein, alwayes joyning Interpretation with his Reading. The *Bishop* of *Derry* in his late discourse of *Humane Inventions in the worship of God*, makes a sad complaint, that the *Nonconformist* dont use to read the Scriptures in their Assemblies. He sayes, that *in all the Meetings in the North of Ireland in a whole year there is not so much Scripture read as in one day in the Church. Sure it is a sad thing* (sayes he) *that a man may go to most Meetings many years, and never hear one entire Chapter read in them.* Mr. *Boyse* Answers him, that *it is the general practice of the Ministers in the North of Ireland* (the Ministers there are generally of the Scotch Nation, and of the Presbyterian Judgement) *to read every Morning an entire portion of Scripture, usually a whole Chapter, or at least so much as they can go through with, in an Exposition of half an hours length.* 'Now

(*y*) *V. Voet. de pol. Eccles part.* 1. *lib.* 2. *p.* 665.

'let us suppose there are Forty Meetings in 'the North of *Ireland*, and that in each Meet-'ing half a Chapter is read every Lords-day, 'for three quarters of the year, by this Com-'putation, there will be near Eight hundred 'Chapters read in these Meetings in a year. 'But will the Bishop perswade us that there 'is as much read in one day in the Parish 'Church. Mr. *Boyse* moreover sayes, that 'there are few Sermons of the *Dissenters* in 'which there is not as much of the Scriptures 'recited to the people as if put together would 'make up two or three Chapters And that 'the *Dissenters* have better reason to blame 'the *Conforming Clergy* for casting out the 'Exposition of Scripture when read (as that 'Exercise is distinguished from Sermons) then 'the Bishop to reproach them for not reading 'the Scripture. And that those more fully 'comply with Gods Command, who read 'and Expound, than those that only read. 'He takes notice what a miserable sort of 'Clergy there is in *Russia* and other parts of 'the Christian World, where their Ministers 'are meer Readers. Thus Mr. *Boyse* a wor-thy Minister of the Presbyterian Judgment in *Dublin*, whom I have the rather taken no-tice of because he was born in *New-England*, at *Rowley*, in which Church his Father (a man of Eminent piety) was an Officer. To con-clude the answer to the Question before us. It is evident that in *Origens* time Interpretation of the Scripture did accompany the publick Reading

Reading of it. For he calls their Sermons, *Diageseis*, (†) the enarrations or *Explication* of what had been *Read*. *Origen* was wont himself to read several Chapters. We find that he read the 25, 26, 27, 28. Chapters of the First Book of *Samuel* at one time, but deferred the Exposition of the last of those Chapters to another Opportunity. At another time he read in *Jeremiah* from Verse 10. of Chapter 15. to Verse 5. of Chapter 17. and spent an hour (as he was wont to do) in Explaining and Applying what he had read. As for those who are of the Bishops mind, that many Presbyterians as well as Congregational men are guilty of Sin, and *Humane Invention in the worship of God*, in that they always add Explication or Application to what they read in publick I shall only recommend to their serious Consideration two passages, both which are quoted by Mr. *Boyse*. One is that of *Austin*, *Quare Legitur, si Silebitur, aut quare auditur, si non Expenditur*: Why do we publickly read the Scripture, if we must be silent and not Expound it. The other is that of *Bernard*, *Non tradit Mater parvulo nucem integram, sed frangit eam et nucleum porrigit*: Opening the Scripture is like taking the Kernel out of the Nut.

(†) *Contra Celsum. L. 3. p. 142.*

QUESTION VII.

Is Baptism to be Administred to all Children, whom any Professed Christian shall ingage to see Educated in the Christian Religion?

Answ. If the Question were only whether all Children Adopted by Believing Parents might not be Baptised, we should not oppose. For this is granted not only by the generality of *Protestant Divines*, but Eminent Writers of the *Congregational Perswasion*, particularly Dr. *Ames*, and Mr. *Cotton*, are for the *Affirmative*. But as the *Question* is worded, we defend the *Negative*. And say, that all such persons as are Comprehended in the Question, have not a right to Baptism, consequently it would be a *Profanation* of the Holy Institution of Christ to Administer Baptism to them. For,

1. *Papists*, *Socinians* and other Hereticks are *Professed Christians*. But their Children ought not to be Baptised. For that is to declare their *Religion* to be the true Religion. When the Children of *Israel* were *Baptised unto Moses* in the Cloud, it was thereby signifyed that the Religion taught by *Moses*, was the true Religion. 1 *Cor.* 10 2. But *Papists* have corrupted the very Essentials of the true Christian Religion, not by one but by many Heresies by them mentained, besides their Idolatry. Nor does it follow, that

that if the Children of Papists had no right to *Baptism*, that then their Baptism was a *Nullity* and must be Iterated. For they baptise in the same Name, and use the same outward Element (though with Superstitious Additions of their own) which is of Divine Institution; in which respects although *Fieri non debuit, factum valet*. Now if the Children of *Papists* notwithstanding their being *Professed Christians*, have no right to Baptism, if *any* such should ingage to see a Child Educated in the Christian Religion, that could not Entitle him to this Sacred Ordinance. Who can believe that if a Papist will undertake to be the *God-Father* of the Spurious Children of *Negroes* or *Indians*, then those Children ought to be Baptised? But they ought to be so, if this be a true *Position*, *That Baptism ought to be Administred to all Children whom any Professed Christian shall ingage to see Educated in the Christian Religion*. Our first *Reformers* were large enough in their Principles and Practice as to *the Subject of Baptism*. Nevertheless, they taught that the Children of Papists had no right to *Baptism*. So (a) *Calvin, Farel, Beza*. Yea, the (b) *Reformed* Churches in *France* will not admit the Children of Papists to Baptism, although Protestant God-fathers would engage for their Education in the true Religion. Our famous Mr. *Carthwright*

(a) *V. Calvini Epist.*
(b) *See their discipline & La. Reque. p. 201.*

wright has (e) proved that such Children have no right to Baptism because they are cut off from the Covenant, and do not belong to the Visible Church. We must of necessity own the Church of *Rome* to be a true Church, if we own the Members of it to have right to Baptism. But the contrary has been evinced by Dr. *Whitaker*, *Alting*, *Turretin*, and many others who have made it appear that Papists only retain the words of that which is called the *Apostles Creed*, but not the true sense of it.

2. There are many professors of *the Protestant* which is the true *Christian Religion*, whose Children have not by the appointment of Christ any right to Baptism. For we may not Baptise the Children of profane Parents. A national Synod in *Holland*, Anno. 1619. Permits none to be *Susceptors* in Baptism, but such as are Orthodox in Religion, and *of a blameless Life*. The *Ecclesiastical Discipline* of the Reformed Churches in *France*, permits not them who are suspended from the Lords Supper, to present their Children to Baptism as long as their Suspension shall endure. Every body knows that *Nil dat quod non habet*. No man that has not a right to Baptism himself, can convey a right to his Children. The *Primitive* right must be as good

(e) *In 1 Reply p. 172, 173. & 2d. part of the Reply p. 142.*

(f) *V. Voet. pol. Eccles. part 1. L. 2. p. 661.*

good as the *Derivative*. But a *Known wicked man* has no right to the Seals of Gods Covenant. *Psal.* 50. 16, 17. It is a dishonour to the Name of Christ that such should be owned as his Servants, or wear the *Livery* that belongs to such. 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. When the Church is made an Inn to receive all Comers by a Promiscuous Baptism, the Name of the Lord is prophaned, as sayeth our great (g) *Carthwright* but now mentioned. The Ancient Doctors, particularly (h) *Tertullian* (i) *Chrysostom*, and Especially *Austin*, (k) (who has largely disputed against the Baptising of Ungodly men though Professed Christians) are wont to alledge that Scripture. *Matth.* 7. 6. *Give ye not that which is Holy to Dogs*, against the Baptising of such persons: which words notwithstanding they have another sense are fitly applyed here. For *Baptism* is an *Holy thing*. And the Scripture compares wicked men (though Professors of the true Religion) unto *Dogs*. *Psal.* 22 20. 2 *Pet.* 2 22. No man thinks that Infidels ought to be Baptised. But *Practical Infidels* are many times worse than *Professed ones*. 1 *Tim.* 5 8. *If any man provide not for his own House, he has denyed the Faith, and is worse then an Infidel.* Many *Professed Christians* do *practically deny the Faith*; by their Vicious Lives they

Nul-

(g) *Defence of Admonition. p.* 137.
(h) *De Baptismo. c.* 18.
(i) *De Compunction Cordis L.* 1.
(k) *De Fide et operibus.*

Nullify their Christianity, and are worse than Infidels. To Baptise them would be to prophane the Sacred and Glorious Name of Christ. Shall Swearers, Drunkards, Fornicators, and such like, who live in the visible breach of *the Everlasting Covenant* every Day, have that Covenant Sealed unto them by *Baptism*, when it is manifest that they have no Interest in the thing Signifyed and Sealed by that Ordinance? Have Excommunicates or their Children a right to Baptism? The Jews (as *Buxtorf* (*l*) observes) looked upon Infant Children as Excommunicate with the Parents. And therefore (as another Learned Author informs us) such Children were not Circumcised. A National Synod in *Scotland*, *Anno* 1560, has declared that the Children of Excommunicate Parents ought not (until the Parent Manifest Repentance) to be admitted unto Baptism. *Beza* allows of it in case the Children of the Excommunicate be by the Parents committed to the Tuition and Education of a faithful Member of the Church, (*m*) as we see in his Letter to the Ministers of *Nivenburg* in *Switzerland*, but not without that Caution. When in *Geneva* a Protestant Member of a Church there had Apostatized to the Popish Religion, the Grandmother remaining still a Member of the true Church, desired Baptism

(l) *Buxtorf. in Lexic. Thalmudic. pag.* 1101. *Godwin Moses & Aaron. B.* 5. *Ch.* 2.

(m) *Beza Epist.* 10.

Baptiſm for her Grand-child; but conſidering that the next Parents were both of them Idolaters, and the Child remaining under their Education, the Renowned *Farel* (n) refuſed to Baptize it, though his Colleaque would do it, which occaſioned an unhappy Schiſm in that Church. But then ſhall perſons who are *ipſo Jure* (*i. e. Viſolius Legis ſine ſententia judicis*) Excommunicate (which is to be affirmed of many *Profeſſed Chriſtians*) by Baptiſm be declared to have a regular ſtanding in the Viſible Church? It is by ſome pretended, that *Presbyterians* are for Baptizing *all Profeſſed Chriſtians*. They that ſay ſo are injurious to thoſe our worthy Brethren. The Great *John Calvin* has been Eſteemed the Father of Presbyterians. He was not for Baptizing all that pretended to Chriſtianity, as his (o) Epiſtles ſhow. In the year 1550. Our Engliſh *Joſiah*, King *Edward* the Sixth granted to the *Dutch* Proteſtants, and other Strangers in *London*, a Charter of Incorporation to become a Church, and to have a Meeting Houſe for them, and for their Succeſſors, which He Ordained to be called by the name of the *Church of the Lord Jeſus*, (p) Enjoyning all his Subjects to permit them *quietly to uſe and exerciſe their own proper Rites and peculiar Diſcipline notwithſtanding* they

(n) *V. Calvin Epiſt.* 147.
(o) *V. Epiſt.* 136.
(p) *Fullers Church Hiſtory, B. 7. p.* 407.

they agreed not with the Rites and Ceremonies used in the Church of *England.* These Protestants dissenting from the Church of *England* have been called *Presbyterians.* Their first and *noble Pastor, John,* who was a free Baron of *Lasco* in *Poland,* has Published an account of their Discipline, wherein He declares, *That Baptism is Administred in the Publick Assembly of the Church after the Publick Sermon; for seeing Baptism does so belong to the whole Church, that none ought to be driven back that is a Member of the Church, nor to be Administred to any who is not a Member of it: it is meet that it should be performed Publickly in the face of the whole Church. ---- We do Baptize their Infants alone who have Joyned themselves to our Church by Publick Confession of their Faith and Observation of the Ecclesiastical Discipline. ---- We suffer no Stranger to offer his Infant to Baptism in our Church, who has not made a Publick Profession of his Faith, and willingly submitted himself to the Discipline of our Church.* Thus writes *John a Lasco,* a noble *Polander,* who is Succeeded by the *Dutch Ministers,* and Church now in *London.* To proceed. The *Leyden* Divines, *Polyander, Rivet, Walæus, Thysius,* were accounted *Presbyterians.* But they were not for Baptizing *professed Christians* whose Lives were profane. They (q) say expressly, *Si quis vero Licet fidem Professus impie vivat Baptismo initiandus non est,* for which they give this Reason,

(q) *Synops. pur. Relig. disp.* 44. *Thes.* 46.

Reaſon, That Baptiſm is a Sacrament not only of Faith, but of Repentance; For which cauſe they that perſiſt impenitently in any Scandalous practiſes are not ſubjects meet for that Sacrament. The Learned *Spanheimius* is called a *Presbyterian.* But he has by weighty Reaſons proved, that Profane men though Profeſſed Chriſtians, ought not to be Baptiſed. Mr *Baxter* goes for a *Presbyterian.* (r) He has by irrefragable Arguments evinced, that *the Children of notoriouſly Ungodly men* ought not to be Baptiſed. Mr. *George Gilaſpy* was a Presbyterian of the Church in *Scotland.* Now his words are theſe. (t) *I believe* (ſaith he) *no Conſcientious Miniſter would adventure to Baptiſe one who has manifeſt and Infallible Signs of Irregeneration. Surely we cannot be anſwerable to God if we ſhou'd Adminiſter Baptiſm to a man whoſe works and words do manifeſtly declare him to be an Unregenerate Unconverted perſon.* By the *Teſtimonies* which have been cited, it is clear that the denial of Baptiſm to ſome who are profeſſed Chriſtians is not the Principle of *Independents* only.

3. Such Laxneſs in the Adminiſtration of Baptiſm as is Expreſſed in the Queſtion before us, is Popiſh and Antichriſtian. It was not ſo in the Primitive Ages of Chriſtianity. That Error of *the neceſſity of Baptiſm* (not only

(r) *In his diſputations of Right to Sacraments.*
(t) *In Aarons Rod. p.* 515.

neceſſitate præcepti ſed medij) in order to Salvation. Likewiſe that Error of *Baptiſmal Regeneration*, that Baptiſm does Regenerate men *Ex opere operato*, as Popiſh Authors teach, brought in this Error alſo. *Bellarmine*, and others of that Religion affirm that Baptiſm does *Sanctify the Unclean*, and that therefore it is not profaned when adminiſtred to perſons known to be wicked. *In purſuance* of this principle a Popiſh Prieſt Baptiſed no leſs than three hundred thouſand *Americans*. (u) And another Seven hundred thouſand as their own Hiſtorians inform us) amongſt all which there was not one Good Chriſtian. Moſt certainly, the Apoſtles did not Baptiſe after that Lax manner. And *John Baptiſt* required *Fruits meet for Repentance* of the Adult perſons whom he admitted to this Sacred Ordinance; and when a *Generation of Vipers* came to him for Baptiſm, he rejected them becauſe of their Impenitency. *Matth* 3. 8. with *Luk.* 7. 30.

(u) *V. Purchaſe pilgr. concerning America. p.* 115.

QUESTION. VIII.

IS *Baptiſm in a private Houſe where there is no Church Aſſembly allowable*?

Anſw. Papiſts, Epiſcopal Proteſtants, and ſome *Lutherans* plead for it. But the

(a)

(a) Doctrine of the old *Waldenſes* was, that *Baptiſm ought to be Adminiſtred in a full Congregation, to the end that he that is received into the Church, ſhould be reputed & held of all for a Chriſtian Brother, & that all the Congregation might pray for him, that he may be a Chriſtian in Heart, as he is outwardly eſteemed a Chriſtian.* Moſt of our Writers (eſpecially *Presbyterians*) diſapprove of *Private Baptiſm* The *Reformed* in *France*, (b) & the Churches in (c) *Holland* alſo require Baptiſm to be publickly adminiſtred. Our *Engliſh Presbyterians* in the *Directory*, ſays that *Baptiſm is not to be adminiſtred in private places, or privately, but in the place of publick Worſhip, and in the face of the Congregation.* The *Geneva Divines* (as is to be ſeen in *Zanchys* Epiſtles) when this caſe was propoſed to them, *Whether Baptiſm might not be adminiſtred in private*, Adviſed thoſe that ſent to them, *not to Baptiſe any but where there was a publick Aſſembly*, for which they gave ſeveral Reaſons. *Calvin*, although he does not judge private Baptiſm to be a meer nullity, nevertheleſs in his (c) *Inſtitutions*, he diſallows of it. And in his *Epiſtles*, he reaſoneth often

F 2 this

(a) *See* Perin *of the Waldenſes Doctrine. p.* 43.
(b) *See their diſcipline. ch.* 11. *s.* 6.
(b) *v. Voet. de pol. Eccleſ. part* 1. *L.* 2 *p.* 726.
(c) *L.* 4. *c.* 15. *s.* 16.

this manner, (d) *Baptism Seals our Introduction and Initiation into the Visible Church and Body of Christ, and our Adoption to the Heavenly Inheritance, therefore* (sayes *Calvin*) *Fas non est administrare Baptismum nisi in Cœtu Publico,* It is not lawful to administer Baptism except in a publick Congregation. The Judicious and Learned Professors (e) of *Leyden,* condemn private Baptisms: So does (f) *Maresius,* and so does (g) *Alting.* In *Scotland,* (h) Mr. *Calderwood,* (i) Mr. *Gelaspy,* (k) Mr. *Rutherford,* have all of them witnessed against it. It is evident that in the early Ages of Christianity *Private Baptisms* were not used, but there was an Error on the other hand, for they used not to Baptise except at *Easter* and *Pentecost,* when were the greatest Assemblies. In the very beginings of the *Reformation* in *England,* private Baptism was not allowed of except in case of necessity. King *Edward* 6. his *Common Prayer Book,* requires that the people should be admonished to bring their Children to Baptism only on the Lords dayes, and on Holidays, that so all the Congregation might be witnesses of their being received into the

(d) *Epist.* 185.
(e) *Synops. disp.* 44. *Thes.* 53.
(f) *In Epist. Theol.*
(g) *Problem. Theol. part.* 2. *p.* 162.
(h) *Altar. damasc.*
(i) *English popish Ceremonies. p.* 112.
(k) *Plea for Presbytery. p.* 315.

the number of the Faithful, and that they might all be put in mind of what they had promiſed in Baptiſm. And although private Baptiſms are ordinarily practiſed by the Miniſters of the Church of *England*, when no neceſſity compels them, the *Liturgy* allows not of it. The Arguments which our Divines produce againſt private Baptiſm are ſuch as theſe.

1. John Baptiſt did not Baptiſe in private, but where there was an open Publick meeting. It has been objected that *Paul* Baptiſed the Jaylor in a private Houſe where was no Church Aſſembly: To which is Anſwered, that *Paul* was an extraordinary Officer: And that it was impoſſible in that Place at that Time to call a Congregation of Chriſtians to be witneſſes of the Adminiſtration when as yet there were no Chriſtians in that City.

2. Baptiſm is a part of publick Miniſtry: It ought to be as publick as Preaching. Nor may it be adminiſtred except by one who is called to the Publick Miniſtry.

3. No perſon may be caſt out of the Church privately, but the proceedings therein ought to be publick with the conſent and preſence of the whole Church. Therefore the Seal of Admiſſion into the Church by Baptiſm ought to be publick alſo. There is a parity of reaſon therein.

4. Our profeſſion of the Name of God and of Chriſt ought to be in the moſt publick way and manner that poſſibly can be. *Matth.*

10. 32. *Rev.* 14. 1. But in Baptiſm we do in a ſingular manner make a profeſſion of the Name of the true God and of Jeſus Chriſt. *Matth.* 28. 20. *Act* 19. 5. *Gal.* 3. 27.

5. *Didoclavius* (*l*) argues more like a Congregational man than like a Presbyterian. For thus he reaſons. The power of Adminiſtring Sacraments is as *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks, *Delivered to the Church*, although the Diſpenſation or Adminiſtration thereof belongs to the Paſtors. Now *the Miniſter alone* (ſayes he) *has not all the power, ſo as that he may ſeparately Adminiſter the Sacrament to whom he pleaſeth, but there ought to be the approbation, conſent, and preſence of the Church.*

6 This practice of private Baptiſm was grounded on an Error; namely on a perſwaſion of the abſolute neceſſity of Bapriſm to Salvation. *Auſtin* was not without that Error. He thought that Infants who dyed Unbaptiſed could not go to Heaven, for which reaſon he has been called, *Durus Pater Infantum.* There was about the ſame time another Error worſe than this crept into many Churches; *viz.* That none could be ſaved that did not partake of the Lords Supper. So did they miſunderſtand that Scripture *Joh.* 6 53. As if Sacramental Eating were there intended; whereas thoſe words were ſpoken by our Saviour before the Lords Supper was inſtituted, and are meant of the Souls Eating and Drinking by Faith. But from this Error it was

(*l*) *Ubi ſupra. p.* 854.

was that Children were made to Eat and Drink of the Conſecrated Bread and Wine. So leſt they ſhould miſs of Salvation they would Baptiſm them in private when it could not be done in publick. But we know that it is the *Contempt*, and not the meer *Privation* of Sacraments that is damning. The *Helvetian* Churches do in no caſe allow of Baptiſm in any private Houſe. See the *Liturgy* of the Churches in *Switzetland. p.* 90.

QUESTION. IX.

OUght all that Contribute towards the Maintainance to have the Priviledge of Voting in the Election of a Paſtor?

Anſw. It would be *Simoniacal* to Affirm that this Sacred Priviledge may be Purchaſed with Money, or, that *Contribution* can Entitle to it. For,

1. This is againſt the Scripture, and that in more reſpects than one.

1. The Scripture requires all that are taught to Contribute to him that is their Teacher. *Gal.* 6. 6. But it does not ſay that all who are taught ſhall have power to chuſe a Paſtor for that Church where they are taught. In the Primitives Times the *Catechumens* did many of them Contribute to him that was their Inſtructor, but not one of them

them all had the priviledge of Voting in the Election of the Churches Paſtor.

2. The word of God has given power to the Brethren in particular Churches to chuſe their own Officers. *Act.* 1. 26. & 6. 2, 3, 5. & 14. 23. Wherefore to give it to others beſides them is not according to the word of Chriſt.

3. If all that Contribute have power to Vote in the Election of a Paſtor, then many women muſt have that Priviledge, for they may Contribute to the Maintainance. But this the Apoſtle allows not of. 1 *Cor.* 14. 34, 35. So that this Affirmation is Contrary to the Scripture in more reſpects then one.

2. It is againſt Reaſon. For them who have no right to the Lords Supper themſelves, to appoint who ſhall be the diſpenſer of that Ordinance to others, is highly irrational.

3. This will deprive particular Churches of that Power which does belong to them, and which Chriſt ha's purchaſed for them wi'h the price of his own Blood. To have power to Chuſe their own Paſtors is an invaluable Priviledge. For them to give or rather to ſell that Priviledge away to all that will *Contribute*, muſt needs be diſpleaſing to the Lord who has bought it for them at ſo dear a rate. It may be the *Contributors* will be more than twice ſo many as the Brethren of the Church. So it may eaſily come to paſs, that a Paſtor ſhall be Choſen and not ſo much as one in the Church that did, or could in Conſcience Vote

for

for him. So then this Principle is of Dangerous Conſequence. It may ſoon prove fatal and deſtructive to the Churches, and to the Intereſt of Chriſt amongſt them.

4. It is contrary to the principles and practiſes of Chriſtians in the Primitive Times. *Euſebius* ſayes that after the Death of *James*, the Church choſe *Simeon* the Son of *Cleophas* to be his Succeſſor. Nothing is more Evident then that in the Firſt ages of the Church, Paſtors were Choſen by all and only their Flocks; in Chuſing a Miniſter they did *Klerozein*, that is Chuſe him by Lot; from whence it was that Miniſters had the name of the *Clergy* given to them. *Ignatius* writing to the Church in *Philadelphia* tells them, that it belonged to them to Chuſe their Paſtor. The *Nicene Council* in a *Synodal Letter* to the Churhes in *Africa*, adviſe them to Chuſe Orthodox Paſtors inſtead of *Arians*. *Cyprian* tells us, (w) that *Cornelius* was made Biſhop *Suffragio Plebis*, by the Suffrages of the people. Yea, he ſayes Lib. 1. Epiſt 41. that *Plebs maxime poteſtatem habet, vel ſacerdotes dignos eligendi, vel indignos recuſandi.* And there are many paſſages in him and other Fathers, (as they are called) which ſhew that the power of Chuſing *Paſtors* was in the Church. Nay, Antichriſt had got a conſiderable footing in the World, before ever this priviledge of Chuſing their own *Paſtors* was wreſtled out of the hands of *Particular Churches*. It was about the Year 1219. that *Pope Innocent*

(w) *In Epiſt.* 52.

cent III. forbid the *Laity* to meddle in the Election of any Church Guide. M *La Roque* (*x*) ſuppoſeth, that *Canon* was made in oppoſition to the *Albigenſes* who retained the Ancient practice of the Churches in Chuſing their own Officers. The Emperor *Conſtantine* writing to *Nicomedia*, ſayes, that it was in their power to make a Choice of what Paſtor they pleaſed. The Council of *Calcedon* confirms the Churches power of Elections. There are many Inſtances to this purpoſe in the (*y*) writers of *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*.

5. All our Great Reformers and Eminent Modern Divines, (Prelatical ones excepted) have aſſerted the power of Electing Miniſters to be in the Church. The depriving the Church of this priviledge is by *Calvin*, called *Impia Eccleſiæ Spoliatio*. A *Spoil* impiouſly committed upon the *Church* of God. I could eaſily produce Teſtimonies for this, out of *Luther*, *Bullinger*, *Muſculus*, *Urſin*, *Junius*, (*z*) & many others, but it is needleſs. Some Learned writers of the Presbyterian Judgment, in their arguings againſt *Jus Patronatus*, or the power of *Patrons* to impoſe Miniſters on the people, and in their diſputations againſt *Epiſcopal Inſtitution and Induction*, have ſtrenuouſly aſſerted and proved, that *particular Churches have power to*

(x) *of the Eccleſ. diſcipline p.* 20.

(y) *v. Theod. l.* 4. *c* 20 *Socrat. l.* 5. *c.* 15. *Zozom. l.* 8. *c.* 19.

(z) *See Mr.* Jacob *of Church Government, with the peoples conſent. Chapt.* 3.

to Chuſe their own Paſtors. One of the Articles agreed unto by the *United Brethren* in *London* is, *That each particular Church ha's right to Chuſe their own Officers.* That this was the Judgment of the Old *Puritan Nonconformiſts* is aſſerted in that Book which bears the Title of *Puritaniſmus Anglicanus*, which goeth under the name of Dr. *Ames*, becauſe of his preface to it, but Mr *Bradſhaw* and not *Ames* was the Author, as a Learned profeſſor (†) in the Univerſity of *Leyden* has informed us.

6 One of our *Synods* in *New England*, *viz.* that which met at *Boſton* in the Year 1662. does Expreſly declare, That *the power of Voting in the Church, belongs to Males in full Communion*, and that *others are to be debarred from that Power.* Prop. 4. *p.* 18. In other places of the world, although a *Modeſt diſſenting* is not an offence, yet it is not allowed *in Terms to Contradict*, what has been by Synods Eſtabliſhed.

7 To give the Power of Electing Miniſters to any beſides the particular Churches over which they are ſet, is Contrary to the Good Laws of this Province, which Confirm unto the *Several Churches therein, all their former Priviledges reſpecting Divine Worſhip, and Church Order*, and particularly their Power of Chuſing their Miniſters, which Laws have (through the Favour of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to his Churches in *New England*) obtained the *Royal Approbation.* QUES-

(†) *Hornbeck. Epiſt. ad Dureum. p.* 27.

QUESTION X.

IS it Expedient that Churches ſhould enter into a Conſociation, or Agreement, that matters of more then ordinary Importance, ſuch as the Gathering of a New Church, the Ordination, Depoſition, or Tranſlation of a Poſtor be done with Common Conſent ?

Anſw. This is both Expedient and Neceſſary. The *Synod* which Convened at *Boſton* Anno 1662. ha's ſufficiently cleared this Point. And although there was in that *Synod* ſome diſſent as to the *Queſtion* about the *Subject of Baptiſm* then diſcuſſed; in the Anſwer to the other *Queſtion* relating to the *Conſociation of Churches*, there was an Unanimous Concurrence. The deſign of which is not (as has *been* well obſerved by Dr. (*a*) *Ames* and Mr. (*b*) *Parker*) to infringe the Liberty of particular Churches, but from the word of God to direct and ſtrengthen them in the Regular Exerciſe thereof. The Reaſons for it are ſuch as theſe.

1. The Churches of Chriſt ſtand in a Siſterly relation each to other under Chriſt their head, having the ſame *Faith*, and ought to have the ſame *Order*. *Eph* 4 5 *Col.* 2. 5. *Phil.* 3. 16. This Union implyes a ſuitable Commu-

(a) *Medul. Theol. L.* 1 *c.* 39 *Theſ* 27.
(b) *De pol. Rules, L.* 3 . *c.* 22.

Communion, and that they ought to have a Mutual care each of other. *Cant.* 8. 8.

2. The Scripture teacheth that in weighty Cases we ſhould ask Counſel. 2 *Sam.* 20. 18. *Prov.* 3. 5. and 15. 22. and 24. 6. Which General Rules concern *Polities* as well as particular Perſons, and Churches as well as civil Societies.

3. There are Scripture Examples to inſtruct us in our Duty herein. We find, that when the Church in *Antioch* had a weighty Caſe before them, they ſent to another Church for Counſel *Act.* 15 2 The Apoſtle *Paul* ſought for the Concurrence, and *Right hand of fellowſhip* of other Apoſtles. *Gala.* 2. 9. Ordinary Elders and Churches, have no leſs need of each other to prevent their *running in vain*, *Gal.* 2 2.

4. Such a Communion of Churches as that which we plead for, is no *Innovation*, but that which has ever been the Profeſſion and practice of thoſe that have been called *Congregational*. There is a Book which bears the Title of, *An Anſwer of the Elders of the ſeveral Churches in New-England to Thirty two Queſtions*, Printed in the year 1643. Of which Book my Father *Mather* was the Sole Author. And he wrote it in the Primitive Times of theſe Churches, (*viz.* in the year 1639) as himſelf aſſured me. What he wrote was approved of by other Elders, eſpecially by Mr. *Cotton*, unto whom he Communicated it. Now in Anſwer to Q. 18. *p.* 64. are theſe words, *The Conſociation*

ation of Churches into Classes and Synods, we hold to be Lawful, and in some cases Necessary: as namely, in things that are not Peculiar to one Church, but Common to them all. And likewise, when a Church is not able to End any matter which concerns only themselves, then they are to seek for Council and Advice from Neighbour Churches, as the Church at Antioch did send unto the Church at Jerusalem. Act 15. 2. *The ground and use of* Classes *and* Synods *with the Limitations therein to be Observed, is Summarily laid down by Dr.* Ames, *unto whom we do wholly Consent in this matter.* This was, and is the Judgment of all that adhere to the *Order of the Gospel Professed* in the *Churches of New-England.* The world is much mistaken in thinking that *Congregational* Churches are *Independent.* That Name has indeed been fastned upon them by their Adversaries; but our *Platform of Discipline* Chap. 2. Sect. 5. disclaims the name. And so does our Renowned *Hooker* (c) in his *Survey of Church Discipline.* Likewise those famous *Apologists* in the Assembly at *Westminster*, viz. Dr. *Goodwin*, Mr. *Nye*, Mr. *Simpson*, Mr. *Burrough's*, and Mr. *Bridge*, say that *It is a Maxim to be abhorred, that a single and particular Society of men Professing the name of Christ, should Arrogate to themselves an Exemption from giving an account to, or being censurable by Neighbour Churches about them.* That Apostle of this Age, (as Dr. *Goodwin* calls him) Mr. *Cotton*, the first and forever famous

(c) *Part 2. Chap. 3.*

famous Teacher in this *Boston*, when he in the Name of the Elders and Messengers of the Churches, gave to Mr. *Mitchel* the right hand of fellowship, at his Ordination to the Pastoral Office in the Church of *Cambridge*, he did in a singular manner recommend to him (and that Excellent man was to his dying day mindful of Mr. *Cottons* Advice) endeavours for the establishment of a *Consociation* amongst the Churches of Christ throughout this *Colony*, that wise man foreseeing that without this, disorder and confusion would in Process of time inevitably happen; as I have more largely declared in (d) another Discourse in which Mr. *Cottons* proposals respecting the *Consociation* mentioned, are Published to the world. Moreover, that the Concurring Judgment of those who are *Congregational* is according hereunto is Evident from the *Declaration* of *Faith or Order* which was agreed unto by the Messingers of One hundred and Twenty Congregational Churches in *England*, who met at the *Savoy* in *London*, Anno 1658. They thus declare, (e) *In case of difficulties and differances in point of Doctrine, wherein either the Churches in general are concerned in their peace, union, and edification, or any Member or Members of any Church are injured in, or by any proceeding in Censures not agreeable to Truth and Order: It is according to the mind of Christ, that many Churches holding Communion together,*

(d) *In my first Principles of N. E. p. 28. &c.*

do by their Meſſengers meet in a Synod or Council, to Conſider and give their Advice in, or about the matter in differance. But the Teſtimony of that Bleſſed *Jeremiah Burroughs* puts the thing beyond all diſpute. For his words are theſe (*f*) *Thoſe in the Congregational way acknowledge.*

1. *That they are bound in Conſcience to give account of their wayes to Churches about them, or to any other who ſhall require it. This not in an Arbitrary way, but as a duty which they owe to God and Man.*

2. *They acknowledge that Synods of other Miniſters and Elders about them are an Ordinance of Jeſus Chriſt for the helping the Church againſt Errors, Schiſms and Scandals.*

3. *That theſe Synods may from the power they have from Chriſt, admoniſh men and Churches in his Name, when they ſee evils continuing in, or growing upon the Church, and their admonitions carry with them the Authority of Jeſus Chriſt.*

4. *As there ſhall be cauſe, they may declare men or Churches to be ſubverters of the Faith, or otherwiſe according to the nature of their offence, to ſhame them before all the Churches about them.*

5. *They may by a ſolemn act in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, refuſe any further Communion with them till they repent.*

6. *They may declare alſo in the Name of Chriſt, that thoſe erring People or Churches are not to be received into fellowſhip with any of the*

(*f*) In his Irenicum p. 43, 44, 47.

the Churches of Christ, nor to have Communion with any other in the Ordinances of Christ.

If it shall be said, surely they do not come up to these six things mentioned. To that I Answer (sayes Mr. *Burroughs*) *I do not in these deliver only my own Judgment, but by what I know of the Judgment of all those Brethren with whom I have occasion to converse by Conferance both before and since, I stand charged to make it good to be their Judgment also; yea, it has been theirs and mine for divers years, even then when we never thought to have enjoyed our own Land again.* We see by these *Testimonies* that *Congregational men* in general, as well as the *Churches of New-England* in special, are no such *Independents*, no such *Brownists*, no such *Morellians*, as some have represented them to be.

5. If we admit not a *Consociation of Churches*, there will be no Remedy against the *Male Administrations* of Particular Churches; nor any cure of Schisms, or Errors that may happen in our Churches. This has been objected (but injuriously) as a Scandal attending *the Congregational Church discipline*, and that therefore it is *a way not practicable*. Indeed, if we refuse this part of *Church Communion*, the objection would be unanswerable. And who would be willing to be a Member of that Church, in which although he should be never so much wronged, there will be no relief for him upon Earth? There was once a Church in *New-England*, which having censured one of

their Members, he complained of the ſuppoſed wrong done him, to Neighbour Elders, who thought he had received hard meaſure. The Paſtor and major part of the Church were not willing the caſe ſhould have a re-hearing before the Elders and Meſſengers of other Churches. Upon this, great clamours were raiſed, and prejudices taken up againſt the Congregational Diſcipline. Mr. *Cawdrey* got this ſtory by the end, and in his *Epiſtle to the Diſſenting Brethren p.* 10. He ſayes that a Miniſter in *N. E.* writes over to *England*, that this injured perſon would have *no remedy until the Churches in New England were become Presbyterians, and that if Independency does not break all the Churches in New-England excepting a few Semi-Presbyterian, ſome are deceived.* Who the Miniſter was that wrote thus to *England*, Mr. *Cawdrey* tells us not. But it is a great wrong to the Churches of *New England*, and to the *way Congregational*, to Repreſent them, and all that are of *that way*, as being of ſuch *Independent and Unaccountable Principles*, which they utterly diſclaim. Dr. *Owen* in his *Diſciplinary Catechiſm*, and eſpecially in the *Additament thereunto*, (which was written on occaſion of an harſh and raſh cenſure in the *Independent Church* in *Cambridge* in *England*) has with great evidence of reaſon, refuted the maintainers of ſuch an *Independency*.

6. The order aſſerted is (as has been truly obſerved by the Learned *Doctor* laſt mentioned) confirmed by the practice of the firſt Churches after

after the Apoſtles: for when the Church in *Corinth* had by an undue Exerciſe of Diſcipline depoſed ſome of their Elders, the Church of *Rome* taking Cognizance of it, wrote to them, reproving their raſhneſs, and adviſed their reſtoration, as it is to be ſeen in the Epiſtle of *Clement* than Paſtor of the Church in *Rome*, which *Clement* is thought to be the ſame whom *Paul* ſpeaks of, *Phil.* 4. 3. And when the Church of *Antioch* was afterwards troubled with the Hereſies of their Paſtor *Samoſetanus*, the Neighbouring Paſtors came unto the Church, and joyned their concurrence in his depoſition. It is certain that in the next Ages to the Apoſtles, a Paſtor was not ſettled in any Church without the Concurrence of others. When the Church had Elected a Paſtor, they preſented him to the Neighbour Paſtors for their Approbation, nor could he be legally confirmed without it. (g) *Euſebius* tells us that when *Alexander* was choſen Paſtor of the Church in *Jeruſalem* by the Brethren of that place, he had the common conſent of the Circumjacent Paſtors. And thus (as *Cyprian* informs us), it was practiſed in all the Churches throughout *Africa*. He ſpeaks particularly concerning *Sabinus*, who was Elected a Paſtor of *Exemita* in *Spain*, that Neighbour Miniſters concured in his Ordination, after the *Fraternity* had Elected him. His words are (b), Quod

(g) *Lib.* 5. *c.* 11.
(b) *Cyprian Epiſt.* 68.

Quod factum videmus in Sabini Ordinatione ut de universæ fraternitatis suffragio, & de Episcoporum judicio, Episcopatus ei deferetur. We find in *Ecclesiastical Story*, that in the Primitive Times the Names of Persons to be Ordained were Published abroad that so if any one had ought to object they might produce it. Which custom of the Christians in the Election of their Pastors was so highly approved of by the Emperor *Severus*, as that he would have it put in practice in Establishing Governours of Provinces throughout the Empire.

7. Neither do the Reformed Churches Ordain a Minister without the concurrence and approbation of Neighbour Ministers. To *give the Right hand of Fellowship* to a new Ordained Minister, was a usual custom amongst the Churches in *Bohemia*, for which they alledged that Scripture, *Gal.* 2. 9. as is Testifyed by (*i*) *Commenius*. In the beginning of the *Reformation* in the Church of *Scotland*, one Article of their discipline, is, That *when a Minister is Ordained the rest of the Ministers shall take the Elected by the hand in sign of their consent*, as is related in the *History of the Reformation* (*k*) which goeth under the Name of Mr. *Knox*. I find also, that there is the like practice in the Protestant *French Churches*: When a Minister is Ordained, two Deputies of the *Synod* or *Colloque* are appointed *in the presence of the People, to give him the Right-hand*

(i) *Rat. ordin discipl. p.* 33.
(k) *Page* 288.

hand of Fellowship. These things I have the rather mentioned for the Information of our young Divines, who being Unstudied in the Controversies of Church discipline, are apt to think that the custom of giving *the Right hand of Fellowship at Ordinations*, is a *Novelty* and *Singularity* practised no where but in *New-England*, whenas it was used in other Churches long before there was a *New-England* in the world. But (not to divert) the *French Protestant Discipline* will by no means allow that a Minister should intrude himself into any Church, without the approbation of Neighbour Pastors. One of the Articles of their Discipline is in these words, *The Minister that shall intrude himself, although he were approved by the People, is not to be approved by Neighbour Ministers or others.* A late (1) Author that Comments on this Article so far [illegible] *French discipline*, observes that it holds a Conformity with the practice of the Churches in the primitive Times. For the Council of *Antioch* has this *Canon, If a Bishop out of Employment intrude himself into a Vacant Church, and usurp the place without the Authority of a Synod, Let him be turned out, although he may be approved by all the People, which he shall have gained to him.* Thus careful have Churches been, both in former and in later ages that in the Establishment of a Minister, the concurrence of Neighbour Elders should be endeavoured.

And

(1) *La. Roque p.* 23.

And this which has been said is consonant to the Articles agreed unto by the *United Brethren* at *London* They declare, *That in so weighty a matter as calling and chusing a Pastor, we Judge it ordinarily requisite, that every such Church consult and advise with the Pastors of Neighbouring Congregations.* And that, *It is Ordinarily requisite that the Pastors of Neighbouring Congregations concur in the Ordination of the Person chosen by the Brother-hood of that Particular Church.* That word *Ordinarily* is well put in, because in a Time of Persecution that cannot be done, which in a Time of Liberty may, and ought to be attended. The Presbyterian discipline of *France*, requires that a Minister shall not be admitted to his Office, but by the Provincial Synod; *except* (say they) *it be in troublesome Times*, and then he may be ordained with the Approbation of only [redacted] Ministers. The like to which was decreed in the *Synod* of *Nice*, that ordinarily all the Pastors of a Province should concur in the Ordination of a Pastor, but in case of an urgent necessity so requiring, it might be done with the concurrence of three Pastors. And these things may serve to justify a former Law made by the civil Government in this *Colony*, That *no person should be Ordained a Minister in any Church, but with the Approbation of the Elders and Messengers of four Neighbouring Churches.* This practice although it has not at present

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the Authority of the civil Law to confirm it, nevertheleſs, being grounded upon Scripture and right reaſon, it ought to be Sacred unto us.

QUESTION. XI.

MAY the Brethren in Churches and not the Paſtors only be ſent unto, and have their Voice in Eccleſiaſtical Councils?

Anwſ. We maintain the *Affirmative* in this *Queſtion*. In the laſt General *Synod* which was in *New-England*, *viz.* That which met at *Boſton* in the year 1679. Some Churches ſent only their *Elders* without any *Brethren*: which the *Synod* was ſo far unſatisfyed with, as that they would not allow thoſe *Paſtors* to ſit with them, until they had prevailed with their Churches to ſend *Brethren* alſo, being very tender of admitting any thing that ſhould look like an infringement of that Liberty and priviledge which does by the Inſtitution of Chriſt belong to the *Brotherhood* in particular Churches. The reaſons of our Judgement are ſuch as theſe.

1. The firſt Synod that ever was in which a Copy and Sampler is left to all Succeeding Generations, did conſiſt not only of *Elders* but of *Brethren*, who had their voice therein, namely the Synod at Jeruſalem, of which

Act. 15. giveth us the account. The 4th. verſe ſpeaketh of *the Church* as well as of the *Apoſtles and Elders*: Now he that was in his Time *the Oracle of the Univerſity of Cambridge* argueth thus, (*m*) why was the cauſe brought *to the People* and not to the *Elders only*, if they had not power to judge in the caſe? And he therefore concludes againſt *Bellarmine*, that every *Laice* in that *Synod* had a diſinitive ſuffrage as much as *Peter* himſelf. And whereas *Bellarmine* objects, that *the Brethren did only hear and not ſpeak*, in that Aſſembly *Whitaker* argues from verſe 12 That *the Brethren had been* (*not tumultuouſly but in an orderly manner*) *declaring their apprehenſions on the caſe under controverſy*; or however that the Expreſſion in that *Verſe* implys, that they had a Liberty of Speech granted to them. And in verſe 22. 'tis ſaid, *It pleaſed* the Apoſtles and Elders *with the whole Church, &c.* In the Council of *Baſil*, it was argued, that that word, *It pleaſed*, being ſpoken not of the Elders only, but of others, it does Evidently import, that thoſe other, even *the Members of the Church* had alſo a power of Judgment and determination in the Queſtion then under debate. From thence likewiſe does *Juel* againſt *Harding* prove that *Laicks* (as they calls the *Brethren* in Churches) have this power of right belonging to them, to *Sit and Judge in Eccleſiaſtical Councils*. And ſo does Dr. *Willet*

(*m*) *Whitaker de Conciliis.*

Wilet (n) (a Learned and worthy Conformable Divine of the Church of *England*) from that same Scripture conclude. Moreover, in in *Verſ.* 23. 'tis ſaid, that the Letters containing the *Decrees* of that *Council* were *Sent* (and conſequently ſigned) in the Name *of the Brethren* as well as of the Apoſtles and Elders. Which ſhows that they had ſome-thing elſe to do in that *Synod* than only to keep ſilence, and hear what others had to ſay. Wherefore Dr. *Owen* might well ſay, (o) That *in Synods, it is not neceſſary that Elders alone ſhould be ſent by the Churches, but they may have others joyned with them, and had ſo until* prelatical uſurpation *over-turned their Liberty. There were many beſides* Paul *and* Barnabas *ſent from* Antioch *to* Jeruſalem, *and the* Brethren *of that Church, whatever is impudently pretended to the contrary, concurred in the decree and determination there made.* Thus Dr. *Owen.*

2. There is weight in *Auſtins* Argument, *viz.* That the power of the Keyes belongs to the whole Church: And that therefore not the Paſtors only ſhould have their voice in Councils. Since Councils repreſent the Churches by whom they are choſen, it is meet that ſome of each order ſhould be choſen. Church-Members are fellow Citizens, and therefore ought not to be deprived of their power.

(n) *In Synops papiſm. Cont.* 3 Q. 3. p. 126.
(o) *Of a Goſpel Church p.* 263.

3. It is not their Office but the Churches *Delegation* that giveth power to be the Members in *Synods*. The *Specificating act* in which *Synodal power* and so the right of a *Decisive Vote* is founded, is the Churches *Delegation*. None ought to be Admitted into such Assemblies, but those whom the Churches shall send. Now as in Civil Councils, many times not only Magestrates but other Citizens duely qualified are sent to represent the City whose delegates they are; so in *Ecclesiastical Councils*, not only the Rulers of the Churches, but others may receive a mission from them, and have then and there, equal power with the former. True it is, that of these *Delegates* from the Churches, the *Elders* ought to be the principally concerned. They are presumed best to know the state of their Churches, and to be best able to Judge in *Ecclesiastical Affairs*. This notwithstanding, they are not to assume the sole power to themselves, nor yet a Negative Voice in in such Assemblies, as they may in their own particular Churches. It must (sayes Dr. *Owen*) (p) *be affirmed that no persons by Vertue of any Office meerly, have right to be Members of* Ecclesiastical Synods *as such. Neither is there either example or reason to give colour to any such pretence. Officers of the Church*, Bishops, Pastors, Elders, *may be present in them, ought to be present in them, are meetest for the most part so to be, but* meerly as such, *it belongs not unto them.* This will seem to some to be *Independent*

(p) *Ibid. p.* 260.

(*dent*

pendent Doctrine. But that is their miſtake. *Bullinger, Hyperius, Daneus, Voetius,* and amongſt our Engliſh writers *Whitaker, Parker* and other great Divines have affirmed as much as this comes to. Yea, the generality of our Divines in their diſputations againſt the Papiſts *Epiſcopal Monopoly* of *Synodal Power,* reaſon as we do. And it is clear from this Argument. If it belongs to Elders *as ſuch* to be Members of *Synods,* then *all ſuch* muſt be there. But if ſo, then in caſe a *Synod* ſhould continue ſitting a year together (as it often happens) all that while the Particular Churches to whom thoſe Elders belong that are remote from the place where the *Synod* meets, muſt not have one Elder to inſtruct and guide them.

4. The Queſtions which are handled and decided in *Synods* are commonly ſuch as *Brethren* and not Elders only are concerned in. This Reaſon is urged by our *Juel* (a great light in the Engliſh Church) in his defence of the *Church of England.* Yea, ſome Learned Papiſts have been ſo ingenuous as to confeſs there is weight in it. *That which pertains to all is not valid, if ſome of all ſorts have not a conſent in it;* which aſſertion (ſayes Dr. *Field* writing againſt the *Romaniſts*) ha's its foundation in nature and in reaſon.

5. In ſome Churches there are Brethren whoſe gifts and abilities are beyond their Paſtors. And why ſhould not ſuch be Members of *Eccleſiaſtical Councils,* and have a ſuffrage therein equal with any others? In ſome

Monasteries of old there were Readers of Divinity, whose work it was (as the incomparable (q) *Usher* has observed) to instruct *Clergy men*. There are at this day in some *Universities*, Learned professors of *Theology* (who are not Pastors of any Church) perhaps more able to give light in a difficult Controversy than any *Elder* in the *Synod*. What reason can be given why Churches should not delegate such, or why they should not have *decisive Votes* as well as any others?

6. The most Famous *Synods* which have been in the world have consisted not of Elders only. That in the next Ages to the Apostles others besides Pastors were Members of *Ecclesiastical Councils*, our Divines in their writings against the Papists have proved. In the Council of *Calcedon* there were Seven Earles, and ten noble Senators, and not *Ecclesiasticks* only. Since the Reformation, the Churches of *Sweveland* (r) Petitioned that there might be a *Council* called *of every degree and state* consisting of the best Learned and most Godly men whom the Province did afford. In the famous *Synod* of *Dort*, there were besides Pastors, Professors of Divinity, and many *Seniors* or *Ruling Elders* who were not ordained Officers. In the *Assembly* at *Westminster* which met *July* 1. 1643. There were not only Pastors of Churches, but several noble men,

e. g.

(q) *de Succes. Eccles. c.* 7. *t.* 24.
(r) *See Harmon. of Confessions. p.* 602.

e. g. The Earl of *Pembroke*, the Lord *Say*, the Lord *Wharton* (who told me Eight years agoe, that he was the only person of that Assembly then living) and several others of the Nobility, and some Gentlemen of the House of Commons, Mr. *Selden*, Mr. *Rouse*, Mr. *Whitlock* and others: Also Commissioners from *Scotland* were joyned with them, *e. g.* The Earl of *Lothian*, Lord *Warristone*, Lord *Lauderdale*, besides Ministers from that Kingdom. So then it is not an *Independent Phansy*, that Assemblies met to consult about Ecclesiastical and Religious Controversies should consist of other Persons besides Ecclesiasticks.

7. Some not sound in the Faith have thought it their interest to maintain the Negative in this Question. In an old Heretical Council (*s*) there was an outcry, *Synodus Episcoporum est*, Synods should consist of none but Bishops, others are Superfluous. So do the Papists Teach: They say that in the Synod *Act.* 15. only the Apostles were Judges, and that the *Laics*, or *Brethren there had nothing to do but to hear and submit their Judgments and Consent to what the other should determine.* Just after the same manner do some *Prelate Protestants*, particularly *Sutliff*, and *Bridges* express themselves. The Jesuit *Sanders* railes against the *Magdeburgenses* because in their *Eccl siastical History* they affirm that *Laicks* were Members of *Synods*. *None* (sayes he)

(*s*) *V. Willet ubi supra. p.* 127.

but mad-men can believe that Mechanicks should sit in Council with Bishops to Judge of Ecclesiastical affairs. But as to that objection, that Illiterate persons are not fit to be in *Synods* there to determine Questions wherein Religion is concerned, a very Learned *Dutch* (t) Divine giveth a double Answer.

1. That some who are not Pastors of Churches are nevertheless men of great Learning as were many of the *Seniors* in the *Synod* of *Dort*.

2. That some who do not excel in Scholastical Learning are versed in the Holy Scriptures, and in Zeal and Piety Excel some Ministers. Many *Seniors* with us (sayes he) abode by the Truth, when their Pastors did not so, in the Time when the *Arminian Remonstrants* made a disturbance in the Churches.

(t) *Voet pol. Eccles. part* 3. *p* 195.

QUESTION. XII.

DOES the Essence of a Ministers Call Consist in his being Ordained with the Imposition of hands by other Ministers?

Answ. There are who say that it does: And that the Minister imposing hands must be a Bishop, or otherwise it is no volid Ordination. Which notion makes all (or most of) the Ministers

Miniſters in *France*, *Switzerland*, *Denmark*, *Holland*, *Scotland* &c. to be no true Miniſters for want of *Epiſcopal Ordination*. We have theſe things to offer to the contrary.

1. The Eſſence of a Miniſters Call conſiſts in a mutual Election between him and his People. As in Marriage the Conſent of both parties is Eſſentially requiſite, but a publick Solemnization of the Marriage is not ſo. The *Coronation* of a King is not Eſſential to his Office, nor is the Solemn *Inauguration* of a Publick Magiſtrate Eſſential to his being a Magiſtrate. No more is *Ordination* to the being of a Miniſter. Learned Papiſts notwithſtanding they are wont to place the Eſſence of a Miniſters Call in his Ordination, ſays that a *Cardinal* has his Eccleſiaſtical power by vertue of his *Election* before his *Inſtallment*. And that a *Pope* when Elected has Power to rule the Church before his *Inthronization*. The Lawyers ſay that *Solennia non ſunt de rei Subſtantia*. We cannot ſay that if a man has not received Impoſition of hands that then he is no Paſtor, but we may ſay that if he has not been Elected by ſome Church of Chriſt he is no Paſtor, but his Ordination is a nullity. For which cauſe the Learned (u) and noble *Morney* approves of *Chryſoſtom*, his ſaying that *Election by the People is ſo neceſſary that without it there is neither Altar, nor Prieſthood*. And a whole Council, *viz.* that of *Calcedon* has pronounced

(u) *Of the Church. Cha.* 11. *p.* 125.

nounced all such *Ordinations* to be null, as we shall afterwards have occasion more fully to declare. Suppose a person qualified with Ministerial gifts should suffer Shipwrack in a remote Island where there are none but Heathen, and should by Preaching be instrumental in the Conversion of many of them, might not these his Converts Elect him to be their Pastor, and might not he accepting of their Call, Administer all Ordinances to them without any Ordination by the Imposition of the hands of Ministers, where there are no Ministers? Mr. *Hesle* a Learned Presbyterian does not deny it. And Dr. *Whitaker* (w) affirms no less in saying, That *if there were not a Bishop in the World the Church could Create Bishops*. Ecclesiastical Story informs us, That *Ædisius* and *Frumentius* being private men by Preaching the Gospel Converted a great Nation of Indians. Might they not Administer Sacraments to these Converts being Elected by them to be their Pastors, without any Imposition of hands from other Pastors in a Country where none were. See Dr. *Fulk* on *Rom.* 10. 15.

2. Not only *Congregational Men*, but many of the *Presbyterian Judgment*, and others also, esteem *the Imposition of Hands* to be an indifferent and not a necessary thing. That which may be either done or left undone without Sin. Thus do the Presbyterians in *Scotland* declare. In the *History of the Church of*

(w) *de pon. tis Roman Quæst. 2. cap 15. p 300.*

of Scotland written by Mr. *Calderwood*, *p.* 26. It is asserted that *Imposition of hands they judge not necessary in the Admission of Ministers*. And when in the year 1597. that *Question* was by the King put to the General Assembly, (*x*) *Is he a Lawful Pastor who wants Imposition of hands?* Their Answer was in these words, *Imposition or Laying on of hands is not Essential and necessare, but Ceremonial and indifferent in the Admission of a Pastor*. This does Mr. *Gillespy* also maintain in his Learned *Discourse against English Popish Ceremonies p* 285 The Dutch Churches esteem Imposition of hands to be *Adiaphorous*. And therefore sometimes in the Ordination of Pastors they omit that Ceremony; and they never use it in the *Ordination* either of *Ruling Elders* or of *Deacons*. So far as I can learn, the Churches of *New-England* are the only ones in the World that Ordain Ruling Elders or Deacons with the Imposition of hands. (*y*) *Piscator*, *Daneus*, *Alting Zepperus*, *Polanus*, declare it to be *Indifferent*. So do *Balduinus*, *Gerhard* and other writers (of the *Lutheran* perswasion. In some places in (*z*) *Germany* they use this *Rite* of *Imposing hands*, in the Ordination of Ministers, in Baptism, and in Confirmation, and at Marriage also, but in all as a thing *Adiaphorous*.

3. If

(x) *Calderwood Hist of Church of Scotl p.* 383.
(y) *In* 1 *Tim* 4. 14
(z) *V. Voet. de pol. Eccles. part* 1. *L.* 2. *p.* 465.

3. If we make the Essence of a Ministers Call to consist in his Ordination by imposition of hands from other Lawful Ministers, it will be a difficult thing to prove that our first *Reformers* were true Ministers of Christ. As for Ordination in the Church of *Rome* some of them renounced it, not at all supposing themselves to be Ministers of Christ meerly on that account. They thought it was their duty, *inordinatissimam Ordinationem ejurare*, as *Beza* speaks. Some of them never had it. For they did first Preach without any formal Call or Allowance of those who usurped the Title of Pastors and Bishops, and the Sole power of Ordination, and were afterwards called to the Ministry by the Churches which they had taught. *Tilenus* being demanded of the *Earl of Leven* from whom *Calvin* had his Calling, Answered, from the Church of *Geneva*, and from *Farel* his Predecessor, who had also his from the People of *Geneva*, who had Right and Authority to institute and depose Ministers. *Bellarmine* objects that the Protestants have no true Ministers among them, because they have not received Ordination by Imposition of hands *Successively* from the Apostles. Dr. *Willet* in Answer thereto sayes, (a) *In the Corrupt times of the Gospel the Lord has raised up Faithful Ministers to his Church that could shew no Succession from the Degenerate Clergy.* They that stand upon a Lineal Succession

(a) *Synopsis Contr.* 2. Q. 13. p. 81.

ceſſion of Ordination from the Apoſtles, muſt of neceſſity own the Church of *Rome* to be a true Church, and (the *Biſhops* of *Rome*) *the Miniſters of Antichriſt* to be the true Miniſters of Chriſt. For Churches to go to them for Ordained Miniſters, is (ſayes *Melanchton*) as if the Sheep ſhould go to Wolves for Shepherds. It has been well ſaid by thoſe who have gone before us, That *God does ſo much abhor Antichriſt that he would not have his People to ſeek to him, nor to his Prieſts to Ordain Chriſts Miniſters, as he would not take of* Babylon *a Stone for a corner, nor a Stone for a Foundation.* Jer. 51. 16. Whereas *it is objected* (ſayes Mr. *Perkins*) *That they who are Lawfully called are Ordained by them whoſe Anceſtors have been Succeſſively Ordained by the Apoſtles. I Anſwer, there is a Succeſſion of Doctrine in which our Miniſters Succeed the Apoſtles, and this is ſufficient. If in Turkey, or America, or elſe where the Goſpel ſhould be received by the Counſil and perſwaſion of private Perſons, they ſhall not need to ſend to Europe for Conſecrated Miniſters, but they have power to Chuſe their own Miniſters, from within themſelves.* Thus Mr. *Perkins*. To the like purpoſe does (†) *Zanchy* ſpeak. And *Voetius* in his Learned Book concerning the *Deſperate cauſe of Papacy*, has made it as clear as the Light of the Sun, that not a *Perſonal Succeſſion*, but a Succeſſion in reſpect of

(b) *On Gala.* 2. 11.
(†) *In Eph.* 2. *de Baptiſmo.*

of Doctrine is necessary to make a true Minister of Christ.

4. There are Judicious and Learned men who conceive that others besides Ministers may Impose hands in the Ordination of Ministers. This is asserted *in our Platform of Discipline*, which had the Approbation of many Divines as Eminent for Piety and Learning as most which this Age has produced. Nor is this which will seem a very strange *Assertion* to some, a notion peculiar to *New-England Divines* only. Others of as deep Judgment as any whom the World has known, have maintained the same. Dr. *Ames* (c) sayes, that as the power of Seeing is formally and subjectively in the Eye, yet originally in the whole Animal, so is the power of Ordination in the whole Church, and that therefore although in a well constituted Church, the Act of Ordination is to be performed by the Elders, *in case duely qualifyed Elders are not to be had, Ordination may be performed by non Elders.* And that in a Corrupt state of the Church where Order and Ministry fails, *A plebe actus Ordinationis Legitimè fieri potest*, the People may Ordain. Dr. *Whitaker* (d) affirms, that they that have power to Call have power to Ordain. And that *the Church has power both to Call a Bishop and to Ordain him also.* Not only Congregational men, but some *Presbyterians* whose

(c) *Bellerm enervat Tom. 2. L 3. cap 2.*
(d) *De pontifice Rom. Q. 2. c. 15. et de Ecclesia. Q. 5. c. 6.*

whose great Learning and Piety has made them Eminent, have said as much as is in our *Platform of Discipline* affirmed concerning *Ordination*. *Voetius* (a) asserts, *That the Church may delegate a Member of their body to Ordain a* Presbyter, *or may wholly omit the Solemnity of a Consecration, and that the Person chosen to the Ministry, may by vertue of his* Election *perform the acts belonging to his Ministerial Office.* The very same is affirmed by *Dilectavius p.* 242. And by Mr. *Gillespy* against the Ceremonies. *p.* 286. Also *Gerson Bucer* (†) maintains that in case the *Eldership* should wholly fail the power of Ordination remains with the Church. The Defenders of this *Problem* alledge such Reasons for it, as deserve Consideration. *e. g.*

1 That we read in the Scriptures of *Non-Officers imposing their hands* upon such as were set apart unto a Sacred Office. The *Levites* were *Ecclesiastical Officers*, but the Children of Israel who imposed hands on them were not so. *Numb* 8. 10.

2 We read in *the New-Testament* of *Ordinary Officers* imposing hands on them who were *Extraordinary* Officers. Thus *Ananias* imposed hands on *Paul. Act* 9 And after that, the Elders of the Church in *Antioch* imposed hands on *Paul and Barnabas. Act.* 13. 3. And not only *Paul* but the Elders of the Church in *Ephesus* imposed hands on *Timothy*, who was an *Evange-*

(a) *Desp. cath. pap. L.* 2 *c.* 2. *p.* 269, 274.
(†) *De Guber. Eccles. p.* 262, 263.

liſt and therefore an Extraordinary Officer. Now if an ordinary Officer may lay his hands on one that is Extraordinary, why may not a *Non-Elder* appointed there-unto by the Church, do the like to one that is only an Ordinary Presbyter? This clearly Anſwers what *Papiſts* and *Prelates* are wont to object, *viz.* that *the Ordainer is greater than the Ordained*, and that therefore none but *Biſhops* ought to Ordain or impoſe hands, as being a degree above *Presbyters*. But was *Ananias* greater then the Apoſtle *Paul*? or the Miniſters in the Church of *Antioch* greater then *Paul and Barnabas*? or the Presbyters in *Epheſus* greater then *Timothy*? In the beginning of the *Reformation* in *England* ſeveral who had never been Ordained *Prieſts* by *Biſhops*, were nevertheleſs made Biſhops, as is obſerved in the late *Collection of State Tracts. p.* 50. Some *Councils* have allowed of the Ordination of *Biſhops* in a caſe of neceſſity when *Biſhops* were not at hand, by thoſe who were no *Biſhops*, but inferiour to them, which neither do ſome of our Epiſcopal Writers gainſay: And notwithſtanding the *Council of Trent* has declared all *Secular Ordinations* to be nullities, that dos not make them to be ſo.

3. *Impoſition of hands* in Ordination is not a *Sacrament* (as many of our Divines have proved againſt the Papiſts) nor has it any Religious Significancy in it. No doubt but this *Rite* might Lawfully be uſed at the *Inauguration* of ſome *Civil Officers*, as the Jews from whom it is borrowed, *Impoſed hands* on a *Senator*

nator when Solemnly admitted into the great *Sanedrin*, and upon a *Doctor* in one of their Colledges when admitted to a *Rabbinatus* as *Alting* (*e*) shows: Though sometimes they were *Promoted* without any Imposition of hands as *Buxtorfe* (*f*) out of the Jewish Writers inform us

4. Mr *Hookers* Judgment, is, that *Ordination* is not an act of *Authority* but of *Order* only. And that therefore it may be performed by Non-Officers. As for that Objection which some have thought weighty. *viz. That none can give what himself has not*, and that therefore men upon whom hands were never imposed cannot impose hands upon others, it is easily Answered, men may give that which they are not formally only vertually the Subjects of A Nation by chusing a King give him Legal Power. A City by Chusing a Lord Mayor, make him a Magistrate. A Woman by giving her self in Marriage causeth the man to whom she giveth her self to have the Power of an Husband: but no man will be so absurd as to say, that a Woman has formally the power of an Husband. In former Ages the Kings of *England* in their *Charters* to *Abbats* and *Bishops* (†) gave them power to *Ordain* Monks and Clerks: But those Kings

(*e*) *De Academia Hebr.*
(*f*) *Lexic. Thalmud. p.* 1498.
(†) *v. Malmesbury de Gest. Reg. Angl. L.* 2. *c.* 7, 8.

were not themselves Ecclesiastical Officers, or *Ordained*. Notwithstanding all this Discourse, I am far from approving that which ha's been practised in some Churches, who when Neighbour Elders were present, have improved Brethren to impose hands on their Pastors. I think it were better to have an *Ordination* with Fasting and Prayer only, without any imposition of hands, (as is practised in many Congregations in *England*) then to have that unnecessary Ceremony performed by *Non-Elders*. The Old Doctrine of *New England*, was, *That if the Church where Ordination is to be performed has not Elders of its own, they should desire Neighbour Elders to Assist in the Ordination of their Pastor, and that with Imposition of hands as well as with Fasting and Prayer.* Most true it is, that we read not in the New-Testament of the Imposition of hands by Non-Elders, because then Elders were not wanting to perform that Service and to make use of *Non Elders* in this affair when Elders might be obtained is not decent, nor approved of by those great Divines that do not absolutely deny the Lawfulness of such a practice. I shall only add, that *Daneus*, in his *Commentary* on 1 *Tim.* 5 22, p. 361. does not only maintain that imposition of hands is not a necessary Ceremony in the Constitution of a Minister, but sayes, that it is *Fatuity* to do as the Papists do, in making the *Essence* of a Legitimate vocation to the Ministry, to consist therein, and that to make it a Question, *whether the same person may re-*

ceive

ceive impoſition of hands more than once; is to propoſe *a vain and inept Queſtion*, becauſe it is not material whether it be ever done at all.

QUESTION XIII.

MAY a man be Ordained a Paſtor, Except to a particular Church, and in the preſence of that Church?

Anſw. There are two parts of this *Queſtion*, which we ſhall Anſwer diſtinctly.

1. We aſſert that no man ought to be Ordained a Paſtor, Except unto a particular Church. For,

1. We have no Inſtance in the Scripture of ordinary Officers Ordained, Except unto a particular Flock. *Act* 14. 23. *They Ordained Elders by Election* (ſo does the *Geneva* Tranſlation read the words truly enough as that Learned Knight, Sir *Norton Knatchbull* (†) has critically evinced) *in every Church*. *Paul* left it in Charge with *Titus*, that he ſhould *Ordain Elders in every City*. *Tit.* 1. 5. He was not to Ordain them to be *Individua vaga*, but a particular place, a City wherein was ſome Church was aſſigned to them to Labour in. He might not (as Mr. *Baynes* and from him (g) *Didocla-*

(†) *In Animadv. in Libr. N. T.*
(g) *Altare Damaſcen. p.* 203.

vius speaks,) Ordain Elders as the University Creates *Doctors of Physick*, without assigning them any Patients, or as they make *Masters of Arts* without providing for them any Scholars.

2. Pastor and Flock are Relates, and therefore one cannot be without the other. It is contrary to the Rules of Reason (as Logicians know) that the *Relate* should be without its *Correlate*. (b) To say that a *Wandring Levite* who has no Flock is a Pastor, is as good sense as to say, that he that has no Children is a Father, and that the man who has no Wife is a Husband. Nor may it be pretended that the *Catholick Church* is his Flock. For (not to insist on the common Protestant Doctrine that the *Catholick Church is Invisible*; as comprehending all true Believers from *Abel* to the End of the World),

3. A Pastor is under an Obligation to feed every one that is of the Flock which he is a Pastor unto. Act. 20. 28. *Take heed therefore to your selves, and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you Overseers* Is any meer man able to feed *all that Flock* of the Church Catholick Visible? A Minister must give an account concerning every Soul in that Flock which he is the Pastor of. *Heb.* 13. 17 They that say they are *Pastors of the Catholick Church*, may do well to think what account they can give of the ten thousands of Souls belonging to their

(b) *Voet de disper. causa papatus. p.* 238.

their Flock that were never inſtructed nor fed by them.

4. Suppoſing a man to have a Particular Church to which he is related, if he is a Paſtor to other Churches beſides that, then it is not in the power of that Church to deprive him of his Paſtoral Office. If they ſhould reject him and that deſervedly from being their Paſtor, he may pretend, I am a Paſtor of the Catholick Church, and will be ſo, do you do your worſt. This ſavours of the Papiſts *indelible Character*, who pretend that if a man has been once *Ordained*, he can never be a *Laic* again. Then a perſon who is juſtly not only depoſed from his Office, but Excommunicated, may be a Paſtor ſtill. And if ſo, then he that is not ſo much as a Member of the Viſible Church may yet be a *Paſtor of the Church Catholick*, for one juſtly Excommunicate, is no longer of Chriſt's Viſible Kingdom, being Authoritatively delared to belong unto Satan. Our *Diſcipline* declares not only that ſuch as never were related to a particular Flock, but ſuch as have been, but now are not ſo related, to be no Church Officers. The words in the *Platform*, Ch 9. S. 7. Are, *He that is clearly looſed from his Office-relation unto that Church whereof he was a Miniſter, cannot be looked at as an Officer, nor perform any act of Office in any other Church, unleſs he be again orderly called unto Office.*

5. When Ordinations at large did with other Corruptions creep into the Churches, a whole

whole *Synod* found it neceſſary not only to bear witneſs againſt that practice, but to declare ſuch Ordinations to be void and null, and the Ordainers liable to Cenſure. It is well obſerved by the Ingenuous Writer of the Hiſtory of the Council of *Trent* (*i*) that *in the Golden Times of Chriſtianity, no Perſons were Ordained but to a particular Miniſtry; but that this pious Inſtitution was ſoon Corrupted, Biſhops Ordaining men that had no Election by any Church.* This cauſed great Confuſion as the *Magdeburgenſian Hiſtorians* have noted. As a Remedy, the Council of *Calcedon* made a decree againſt all ſuch Ordinations. The Sixth *Canon* of that Synod declares, *That if any man ſhall be Ordained abſolutely*, that is to the Catholic without relation to a particular Church, *the Impoſition of Hands which he has received ſhall be null, and that he ſhall not Serve in the Church, to the diſhoncur of them that have Ordained him.* This Decree was Confirmed by other *Synods* afterwards, ſo that it became a general Rule in the Church, that *no man ſhould be Ordained without a Title.* But the forementioned Hiſtorian (with many others) takes notice that this Rule was in proceſs of time perverted. For whereas at firſt to have a *Title* was to have a *particular Church*, afterwards *to have a Title was to have Money.* The *Canons* of the Church of *England* will not permit any one to be *Ordained* without a *Title*, but they too much comply with

(*i*) *Hiſt. Trid. Conc. L. 6. p. 530.*

with the *Papists* in allowing those to have *Titles* who have none such as the *Calcedonian* Council intended.

6. The impleaded *Ordinations* are contrary to the Judgment of our Eminent Divines, and to the practice of some of the best Reformed Churches. *Junius* (k) declares his Approbation of the mentioned *Canon* of the *Calcedon* Synod, 'And that since an Elder is not Ordained 'to the Ministry absolutely, but to the Mini-'ster of this or that Church in particular, it 'is fit that the Church should be concerned 'in the Ordination. And that in the Apostol-'ical Times in the Ordination of a Minister, 'there was first a *Cheirotonia* or Election by 'the People, and then a *Cheirothesia* or impo-'sition of hands; That these two were al-'ways joyned together as the Antecedent and 'Consequent. Mr. (l) *Cartwright* says that *after Election follows* Ordination *which is a Solemn investing or putting a Minister into the Possession of that Office whereunto he was before Chosen.* To the like purpose does Dr *Whitaker* speak; It is needless, and would be endless to heap up Testimonies concerning this, since it is a Common received opinion amongst our *Divines*, (we must always except *prelatical* ones) that *the Election of a Minister by the Church should precede his Ordination.* One of the Articles of the Ecclesiastical discipline of the French

(k) *Animadvers. in Bellarm. Contrum.* 5. *cap* 3. *&c.* 7.

(l) 2d *Reply p.* 272.

French Protestants, is, *Ministers shall not be Ordained without Assigning them a particular Flock.* So in the Kirk of *Scotland* one Article of their Polity is (*m*) *All Office bearers should have their own particular Flocks, amongst whom they Exercise their particular Charge*; as I find it Expressed by Mr *Calderwood*. That Learned (*n*) Author disapproveth of the Impleaded Ordinations, because they make a man to be a Minister only *Impotentia*, but not *in actu*. Indeed Mr. *Rutherford* has such strange words as these, *It is presupposed that A B is Ordained a Pastor before the People can Elect him for their Pastor.* Mr. *Hooker* replies to him that he finds *Bellarmine* speaking just after that manner, which caused Dr. *Ames* to tell him, that he disputed preposterously, and did set the Cart before the Horse, when he placed Ordination before Election. But notwithstanding Mr. *Rutherford* in that particular Notion deserts the Common Protestant Doctrine, in another place he has these words, *A Pastor is* only *the Pastor of that Flock over which the Holy Ghost by the Churches Authority has set him as their Pastor, yet so as when he Preacheth in another Congregation, he ceaseth not to be a Pastor, howbeit not the Pastor of that Flock*; in saying which he yields the cause wholly as Mr. (*o*) *Hooker*

(*m*) *See the History of the Church of Scotland. p.* 105.

(*n*) *Altare damasc. p.* 209.

(*o*) *Survey of Church Discipline p.* 2. *p.* 61.

Hooker tells him. So then we are now agreed. I ſhall only add, that the *United Brethren* in *London* declare that Ordinarily, *None ſhall be Ordained to the work of the Miniſtry, but ſuch as are called and choſen thereunto by a particular Church.* And that Learned *Presbyterian* Mr. *Gilleſpy* affirms, (†) That *Ordination ought to be given to him only who is Elected, and that becauſe he is Elected.*

As for the other part of the Queſtion, *Whether Ordination ought not to be performed in the preſence of that Church where the Miniſter is to Serve?* The Anſwer is, That *Ordinarily* it ought to be. The *Ordinations* which we read of in the Scripture were ſo. If a People who are remote from all Miniſters ſit to Ordain, deſire one whom they have Elected to be Ordained for them in another Land, by a Solemn Separation of him to that Service of Chriſt, with Faſting and Prayer and Impoſition of hands; thats a rare caſe, and I know not why in ſuch a caſe there may not be an Ordination though the Church is not (becauſe they cannot be preſent. But if there are Elders in the place where the Miniſter is to diſpenſe the Myſteries of the Goſpel, for him to receive Ordination not in the preſence of his Church, is irregular and contrary to Scripture Example. In the Primitive Times of Chriſtianity, *Ordinations* were performed not only with the Conſent, but *in the preſence of* the

(†) *Engl. pop. Cere. part.* 3. *chap.* 8.

the Church, yea, of the whole Church in which any *Pastor* was to *Preside*. *Cyprian* (*) affirms that no *Ordination* is rightly performed except the People to whom the Pastor is Ordained be present: He declares this to be according to the Doctrine and Practice of the Apostles. In the *third Century* it was thus practised both in the *Asian*, and in the *African* Churches. Thus was *Origen* (p) Ordained. And another instead of *Narcissus* who was with-drawn from his Pastoral care of the Church in those dayes in *Jerusalem*. The *Magdeburgenses* (q) in their *Ecclesiastical History* note that if any *Bishop* was to be Ordained they sent (not to Ministers in another Province a Thousand Miles distant but) to Neighbour Pastors for their Approbation, *Conveniebant fratres omnes* (say they) all the Brethren came together, and when the Election was over, they proceeded to an *Ordination* with the *Imposition of hands*, *Presente universo populo*, in the presence of all the People. Thus also it is amongst the Reformed Churches in *France*. There was a Time when some young Scholars of the French Nation, having had their Education in the University of *Leyden* in *Holland* received Ordination from the hands of Dutch Divines, at which the *Presbyterians* in *France* were dissatisfyed: For which cause the *Synod* at *Gergean*

(*) *L.* 1. *Epist.* 4.
(p) *v. Euseb. L.* 6. *c.* 8, 10.
(q) *Cent.* 3. *cap.* 6. *p. mihi.* 94, 102.

Gergean in the year 1601. made it one of their decrees, (r) *That Letters be written to the Doctors and Professors of Divinity, in the University of Leyden, intreating them not to Ordain the French Propesants Studienes in their University; but when they have finished their Course of Theology, to send them into France, that here being called to the Ministry, they may receive imposition of hands in the face of our Churches.*

(r) *See Mr.* Quicks *Synodicon.*

QUESTION XIV.

IS the Practice of the Churches of New-England *in granting Letters of Recommendation or Dismission from one Church to another according to Scripture and the Example of other Churches?*

Answ. It is so. See *Act.* 18 27. *Rom.* 16. 1, 2 That this was an usual Practice in the Churches in the Apostolical Times, is plain from 1 *Cor.* 16. 3. *and* 3. 1. *Col.* 4. 10, 11. 3 *Joh.* 3. 8, 9, 10 This practice was continued in the Churches after the Apostolical Times. *Polycarp* in his Epistle to the Church at *Philippi* recommends *Crescens* with his Sister to their Communion, testifying that their Conversation had been blameless. The Greek Churches called such Letters as the Scriptures do *Systatick Epistles* or Letters of Recommen-

dation. In the Latin Churches they were called *Litteræ Communicatoriæ*. *Tertullian* calls them *Literas pacis*. That in the Primitive Times such Letters were in use may be seen in (s) *Baronius*. And that something of this nature was practised in the *Fourth Century* is manifest from a decree of the first Council in *Carthage* (t) That *no one shall Communicate in another Church without a Letter from the Bishop of his own Church*. *Nazianzene* in one of his *Orations* against *Julian* the Apostate speaks of these Letters. And several Ancient *Synods* make mention both of *Literal Commendatitiæ*, and *Litteræ dimissoriæ*. And some of the Protestant Reformed Churches practice as the Churches of *New-England* do as to this matter. So in (u) *France*. And in *Holland* several of their *Synods* have Commended this practice of the Churches, that when persons remove from one Church to another in order to their partaking at the *Lords Table*, they should bring Letters Testimonial with them. Some of their greatest Divines have written in Defence of it. Dr. *Hornbeck* (w) Commends the Churches of *New-England* for this their Profession and practice. The famous *Gilbert Voetius* who has been esteemed the most Learned man in the World; In Answer to that

(s) *Tom. 2. Anno. 142.*
(t) *Magdeb. cent. 4. c 9. p. 402.*
(u) *v. La. Roque. p 145.*
(w) *In Epist. ad Durcum. p. 111.*

that *Queſtion, Whether in the Tranſlation of Members from one Church to another, Letters Dimiſſory and Teſtimonial are not requiſite?* Anſwers, (x) *Ita habet ordo Eccleſiaſticus et laudabili more obtinet in Eccleſijs Belgicis.* Eccleſiaſtical order requires that it ſhould be ſo And this Laudable cuſtom obtains in the *Dutch Churches.* He giveth diverſe Reaſons for it.

1. Such Letters will ſerve inſtead of a new Examination and Tryal which is neceſſary when perſons are firſt Admitted into the Church.

2. Becauſe otherwiſe Churches may be impoſed upon, ſo as to receive Members who are unfit, and it may be under offence in the Churches from whence they come.

3. To receive the Members of another Church without the Approbation of that Church to which they do belong, is the way to make difference in Churches, and to ſet them one againſt another. Thus that Learned man. Granting of *Letters Teſtimonial* was practiſed in the Churches in *Guernſey* when firſt Reformed: Their *Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline* was the Compoſure of the famous *Thomas Cartwright* (as the Miniſters in that *Iſland* aſſured me, when I had my Converſation amongſt them many years ſince) Now one Article of their Diſcipline is, That *there ſhall not be received to the Lords Supper any one of other Pariſhes without Good Teſtimony from his Paſtor, or of two of the Elders where there is no Miniſter.*

(x) *de pol. Eccleſ part.* 1. c. 4. p. 67.

Although it is true, that no Church ought to be made a Priſon, It is nevertheleſs a Sin for any Church Member to leave that Church where the Providence of God has ſet him without juſt cauſe. It is a Violation of his Church Covenant. The removal of a Member from a Church does tend to the weakning of that Church If one may depart without juſt reaſon, why not an other, and a third, and ten, twenty, and more, until the Church is in a manner diſſolved. And therefore 'tis rational that if Members of Churches deſire to remove their Relation to another Church, they ſhould acquaint their own Church with their deſires, and the reaſon thereof that ſo if they are juſtifiable, they may have a Loving *Diſmiſſion*, but if otherwiſe that they may be Convinced of their Error, and deſiſt from their purpoſe. It is no ſign of Wiſdom for a man ſo to abound in his own ſenſe, as not to ask the Advice of others (the Church eſpecially to which he is related) in a matter of ſuch moment *Prov.* 11. 14 & 12. 15. Letters of Diſmiſſion are requiſite that ſo it may be known that his departure is not offenſive By the Letters in Controverſy nothing elſe is intended, *but Letters Teſtimonial from ſome Church of Chriſt, or the Elders thereof, Concerning ſome of their Communion removing from them to another People, be it for leſſer or longer Time.* The ſorts of theſe Letters are diverſe according to the Occaſions

of

of the perſon for whom they are written. It is only for diſtinction ſake that ſome are called Letters of *Diſmiſſion*, others Letters of *Recommendation*. For if we ſpeak exactly, both of them are Letters of *Recommendation*, containing ſome Teſtimonials for the party, and both of them are Letters of *Diſmiſſion*, as ſignifying that he goeth with the conſent of the Church, whether it be with a purpoſe to return, or for continuance with thoſe unto whom he is going. In the *Heads of Agreement* aſſented to by our Presbyterian and Congregational Brethren in *London*, Theſe are ſome, *That a Viſible profeſſor joyned to a Particular Church ought to continue ſteadfaſtly with the ſaid Church, and not forſake the Miniſtry and Ordinances there diſpenſed without an orderly ſeeking a Recommendation to another Church.* Again they ſay, *We ought not to Admit any one to be a Member of our reſpective Congregations that has joyned himſelf to another, without Endeavours of Mutual Satisfaction of the Congregations concerned.*

QUESTION. XV.

IS not the aſſerting that a Paſtor may Adminiſter the Sacrament to another Church beſides his own Particular Flock, at the deſire of that other Church, a declenſion from the Firſt Principles of New-England, *and of the Congregational Way?*

Answ. Not at all. For our *Platform of Church-Discipline* does not at all contradict it, but rather approve of it, *Chapt.* 15. *S.* 4. And some of the First Eminent Ministers in *New-England* have defended the lawfulness of such a practice. So Mr. *Norton* in his Answer to *Apollonius*, Mr. *Shepard* of *Cambridge*, and Mr. *Allin* of *Dedham* in their Answer to Mr *Ball*. And my Father in a Letter of his to Mr. *Hooker*, bearing Date *Nov.* 6 1645. Giveth such Reasons for it as are not easie to be answered. Dr. *Goodwin*, who was a Pillar amongst *Congregationals*, declares his Judgment fully in the Affirmative, and this not only in a Letter written not long before his Translation to Glory, of which I have elsewhere given an account, but in his Discourse of *Church-Government*, in his fourth Volume lately published, which was written long before that Letter, and wherein he shews that such an occasional Exercise of Ministerial Power in another Church at their Request will not Infer any such Jurisdiction as that which the *Presbyterian Brethren* plead for. We shall for the satisfaction of those that have not that Book of the *Doctors*, cause his words to be Transcribed. He thus speaks; (y) 'It is one thing that there may Occasionally be an Exercising of an Elders Power in another Congregation, 'and it is another thing that it 'should be assumed and challenged, which is 'the thing that remains further to be proved 'by

(y) *B.* 5. *Ch.* 10. *p.* 232.

'by the Presbyterial Divines. As it is one 'thing for a Child under Age, tho' he ſhould 'not Govern himſelf, to have Liberty to chuſe 'a Guardian for the Time, but it is another 'thing that a Company of men ſhould aſ-'ſume to be his Guardians for ever. It will 'be one thing for a Corporation to ſend to a-'nother Corporation for their Recorder, a 'man skilful in the Law, to perform the Of-'fice of a Recorder with a Jury at their Seſſi-'on, they now wanting one, or there falling 'out a Caſe of difficulty, wherein their own 'does need Aſſiſtance; but it will be another 'thing for the Recorders of ſeveral Corporati-'ons in a County to go and challenge by ver-'tue of Aſſociation, and the Common Law of 'Communion in the Kingdom, a conſtant 'power of Juriſdiction to be Exerciſed over 'them.

'And in this caſe the Communion of 'Churches in reſpect of Members *Qua* Mem-'bers, and of Elders, *Qua* Elders anſwer one 'another, according to our principles. For as 'the Members of another Church, if they 'come to a Particular Church, and are recei-'ved by their Conſent by them, and ſo for that 'Time become as one body with them, by 'vertue whereof they receive the Sacrament a-'mongſt them, as being for this act incorpora-'ted and as one bread with them occaſiona-'lly, in this do not receive meerly and ſimply 'as Members of another Church, diſtinctly &c. 'a part conſidered, altho' by vertue of their be-'ing Members of another Church, but they are

'thereby for that Time occasionally received
'into that Church *ad tantum* so far as to En-
'joy such and such a priviledge, so as the Sa-
'crament in this, is not said to be given to the
'Members of two Churches apart considered,
'but to one Church as thus making one, tho'
'upon a differing respect; and so it is also
'in their receiving Elders (if we may
'make that supposition) to perform Acts
'of Eldership occasionally, they do it not in
'this single and apart Consideration that
'they are simply Elders of other Churches,
'as if considered only as such they may
'make a Consistory met out of this Church
'to be over this Church, and so Excom-
'municate, but they come to and are pre-
'sent in and with that Church being called
'by them, and received as Elders for that
'Act, and for that Time as one with them,
'so as the Acts which they do perform are
'Acts of that Church, or of Elders in that
'Church, and are not to be considered as
'Acts of other Elders that have no power
'over that Church. Thus far Dr. *Goodwin*.
And that this accords with the Judgment of Congregational Divines, and was also practised in the next Ages to the Apostles, when *Polycarp* Pastor of the Church in *Smyrna* administred the Sacrament to the then Church of Saints in *Rome*, I have more fully declared in an Answer to this *Question*, which was printed in the Year, 1693. And thus it was practised in the Churches of *New-England* in their begin-

beginning Times! For when Mr. *Wilson*, Paſtor of the only Church then in *Boſton*, was abſent from his Flock in a Voyage for *England*, Mr. *Phillips*, Paſtor of the Church in *Watertown*, adminiſtred the Lords Supper to the Church in *Boſton*. This was above threeſcore years ſince. And thus did Mr. *Eliot*, (a zealous man for the Order of the Goſpel, practiſed in the *Platform* of Diſcipline) practice forty years ago in the *Indian Churches*.

QUESTION. XVI.

IS it a Duty for Chriſtians in their Prayers to make uſe of the words of that which is Commonly called the Lords Prayer?

Anſw. It cannot be proved that this is a duty. The *Queſtion* is not whether it is *Lawful* to make uſe of thoſe words in Prayer. No man can rationally doubt, but that the words in that as well as the words of other Prayers in the Scripture may be made uſe of in our Addreſſes to Heaven. The Rigid *Separatiſts* will not deny this. Mr. *Aynſworth* ſayes, (a) *We hold it Good and Holy to uſe aright any of the Lords Prayers, or any words of Scripture, or thoſe or any of thoſe Petitions taught us in* Matth. 6. *or* Luk. 11. *in the words of either*

(a) *v Mr. Pagets Arrow againſt Separation. p.* 4, 63.

either Evangelist, or other words as the Spirit of God which helps us to Pray, leadeth us to any of them Likewise Mr. *Robinson* (*b*) who was a *Rigid Separatist* until Dr. *Ames* convinced him of his Error therein, He sayes, *We hold it Lawful to use those very words in our Prayers, all, or any part of them, if we be thereunto Guided by the Holy Spirit in whom we must alwayes Pray, and by whose help we must make our Requests unto God.* Doubtless then Congregational men will concede as much as this cometh to. Mr. *Jeremiah Burroughs* (a famous Divine of the Congregational Perswasion) once when he Preached his *Expository Lectures* was prevented from coming to the Assembly exactly at the Hour appointed, If he should at that time have inlarged in Prayer as he usually did, the Auditors would have been detained longer then they expected. Nor was he willing to begin his Exposition without any Prayer at all, he therefore began it with only Praying in the words of *the Lords Prayer.* This report I believe; for my most Dear and Honoured Friend Dr. *William Bates*, late Pastor of a Church in *Hackney* near *London* (whom for Honours sake I mention) assured me that he was then present and an *Ear Witness* of what I have now related But the Question is, Whether this is *necessary:* Not whether a Minister *may* without Sin make use of the words of the *Lords*

(*b*) *In his Answer to Mr. Bernard p.* 469.

Lords Prayer, but whether he *Ought* to do it, and Conſequently ſhall be guilty of *Sin* if he does it *not*. The *Queſtion* being ſo ſtated we defend the *Negative*. Let it be conſidered.

1. That our Saviours words are, *After this manner pray ye*. Mat. 6. 9. Whence *Auſtin* (*c*) concludes that Chriſt taught his Diſciples not what *words* they ſhould uſe in Prayer, but what *things* they ſhould pray for. To the ſame purpoſe does *Beda* ſpeak. And this alſo is the ſenſe of *Calvin*, *Muſculus*, *Piſcator*, *Bertram*, and of *Grotius* himſelf, that our Saviour did not intend that *His Diſciples were bound to recite thoſe words in Prayer, nor would He tye them to the uſe of Syllables*. Nor indeed is it probable that our Lord in the midſt of his Sermon would preſcribe a Form of Words to His Diſciples. Whence Mr. *Joſeph Mede* (a great Conformiſt) concludes, (*d*) That *when thoſe words were firſt uttered, the Diſciples underſtood not that their Maſter intended it for a Form of Prayer, but for a Pattern or Example only*. He that prays for any thing not contained in that *Platform* of Prayer, does not pray *after that manner*, but he that does with Faith pray for the things comprehended therein, although he ſhould not uſe one Expreſſion in it, but other words importing that ſenſe, does truly *Pray after that manner*. It is Pleaded that in *Luke* the words are *When you pray, ſay*; but that may well be interpreted not as intending ſay *theſe*

(c) *Lib. de Magiſtro. cap.* 1.
(d) *See his Works. Fol.* 2.

these words, but *these things* in your prayers: So does *Grotius* give the sence of them. When *Moses* was charged, *Thou shalt say* unto *Pharaoh*, &c. *Exod* 4. 22. He did not think that he was obliged to say those *very words*, only to Express that *thing*. Nor did he in delivering his Message tye himself to those words and syllables. The like may be here affirmed. Moreover, most of those that do *Say the Lords Prayer*, do not say as 'tis in *Luke*

2. The two Evangelists in their Reciting that Prayer have not the same words. Whence we conclude that it was given only as a *Platform* or *Directory* for Prayer, and not as a *Form* which we may not vary from. In *Luke* there is no *Amen* concluding the Prayer nor any *Doxology*, besides the words both in the fourth and in the fifth Petition are not just the same words with those in *Matthew*. Now if the meaning of *Pray after this manner*, and of *when you pray, say*, is, that we are in duty bound to use those words and syllables as a Form, whose Form must we follow? whether that of *Matthew*, which is part of Christ's Sermon on the Mount? or that in *Luke* which was taught the Disciples in another place, and on another occasion, near upon a year and half after the Former? Dr. *Lightfoot* (*d*) tells us that the Jews concluded their Prayers in Synagogues, and private Houses with saying *Amen*; but that they never said *Amen* in the Temple, but instead thereof, they concluded with

(d) *in vol.* 2. *fol.* 1138.

with saying these Words, *Blessed be Name of the Glory of his Kingdom forever and ever* I remember a Jewish *Rabbi* says that those words were the usual Prayer of their Father *Jacob*, but the *Doctor* thinks that the *Doxology* is omitted in *Luke*, and added in *Matthew*, to instruct us that we should use this Form, both in Publick and in Private. Yet this Answers not the Question, which of these Forms is to be used; which of them in Publick, and which in Private? If we must keep exactly to the *Jewish* mode of worship, the Form in *Matthew* must not be used in the *Cathedral* which answers to the Temple, because it concludes with *Amen*. Nor must the Form in *Luke*, because it wants the *Doxology*, which is peculiar to the Temple. The Gospel does not require nor approve of *Indaizing* in Christians.

3 That Common Argument, (howeve slighted by Mr. *Paget* (*t*) which many have produced to prove that the Formal usage of the Lords Prayer, is not Commanded, deserves further Confideration, *viz* because *then it would be unlawful to vary at all from those words and Syllables.* When it is said, *Pray thus*, and *when you Pray, say*, those words of our Saviour are not a *Permission*, but an absolute *Commandment*. *When you Pray*, that is, *Whenever* you pray. As, *when* you give Alms, is as much as to say, *when ever* you give Alms. Thus *when soever a Christian prayes*, he must pray after that manner which Christ in his Sermon

(*t*) *Ubi Supra, p.* 74.

on the Mount prescribed. If therefore the meaning of *Pray thus*, is, use these very words, it would not be Lawful at any time to vary from them. Which no man will be so unreasonable as to affirm. It would be less proper for a Christian in his Closet to speak in the plural number. Indeed the Superstitious Jews made a *Canon* that their *Compendious Prayer*, which they call *Majan q. d* a *Fountain Prayer*, and require their Disciples to say it Eighteen times every day, shall be Expressed in the plural number, though he that sayes it has no man with him, and they make him Guilty of Sin that shall Pray that Prayer in the singular number though in his Closet, because he must never look on himself as Separated from the Synagogue. But does any man believe, that if a Christian shall say, give *me* my daily bread, forgive *my* debts, lead not *me* into Temptation, deliver *me* from evil, that he offends by not speaking plurally in the very Syllables of the Lords Prayer? It would be so, if the design of the precept were to tye us up to Words and Syllables.

4. There are few of those who use the *Lords Prayer*, that keep to the words either of *Matthew* or of *Luke* in their saying of it. For in the *Fifth Petition* they vary therefrom. The words in *Matthew* are, *Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors*, Math. 6. 12. The words in *Luke* are, *Forgive us our Sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us*, Luk. 11. 4. When as they that say the

the Lords Prayer uſe the words which are in the *Liturgy*, viz. *Forgive us our Treſpaſſes as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us.* It will be ſaid, that is the ſame *thing* though not the ſame *words* with the other. But this is to give up the cauſe, ſince our Queſtion is not concerning *things* but *words*. Moreover, by this ſmall alteration of the words a Great Truth, viz. *That our Sins are our Debts*, is loſt. *Cyprian* is juſtly blamed for making a little change in the *Sixth Petition*, for he expreſſeth it, *Ne patiaris nos induci &c. Suffer us not to be led into Temptation*, whereby a great and myſterious Truth reſpecting the Activity of Providence in Leading men into Temptation is obſcured. They that pretend they are bound in Conſcience to uſe the *Lords Prayer* as a *Form*, and ſo to keep exactly to the words therein contained, are not able to Extricate themſelves from this Argument againſt them. Nor can I give any reaſon why they expreſs the *Fifth Petition* as they commonly do, excepting this, that they have taken their uſe of the Lords Prayer, not out of the *Bible* but out of the *Common Prayer Book*.

5. It cannot be proved that either Chriſt or his Apoſtles did uſe this Prayer as a Form. A moſt Heavenly Prayer made by our Saviour, is recited in the 17*th* of *John*, but He did not conclude with the words of this prayer: We find in *Acts* 1. 24. And in *Act.* 4. 24. That the Apoſtles prayed in Church-Meetings, but not that they did either begin or conclude

with the recitation of the Lords Prayer. *Durandus* (f) boldly affirms, That the Apoſtles Conſecrated the *Euchariſt*, by repeating the words of Inſtitution, & luper-addino the Lords Prayer. And that *Peter* did at firſt ſo Celebrate that Ordinance in the Oriental Parts, where he Reſided for the ſpace of four years. I doubt not but that this is as true, as what he further ſays, that afterwards that Apoſtle cauſed *three Prayers more to be added to the Maſs* There is no more proof that the Apoſtles any of them uſed to ſay the Lords Prayer, then there is that the *Liturgy* fathered on *James* was written by him; the vanity whereof has been ſufficiently diſcovered by our Proteſtant Divines. That Incomparable Divine and *Caſuiſt*, Dr. *Ames*, (†) judgeth that we may conclude that the Lords Prayer was not given as a Form, but as a Platform, *becauſe the Scripture ſays nothing of the Apoſtles ſo uſing it*. Neither do the Apoſtles or Evangeliſts in any of their Writings Exhort Chriſtians unto the formal uſage of that Holy Directory for prayer. Nor do we read any thing of that matter in the next Age after the Apoſtles. *Euſebius* (g) has recorded an Excellent Prayer made by *Polycarp* when he Suffered *Martyrdom*; but although he prayed after that manner which the Lords Prayer requires, there is not one ſentence of that prayer in his. *Juſtin Martyr* gives an account of what was

(f) *Rationale Divin. Li.* 4 *c.* 1, & *cap* 47.
(†) *Caſ. Conſc. L.* 4. *c.* 17.
(g) *L.* 4. *c.* 15.

was practiſed in the Aſſemblies of Chriſtians in thoſe days, *viz.* of their Reading the Scriptures, Preaching thereon, Prayers, Adminiſtration of Baptiſm and the Lords Supper, but has not the leaſt hint of their uſing to repeat the Lords Prayer, which had it then been Cuſtomary, no doubt he would have mentioned it as he does ſome other things which were deviations from the Apoſtolical practice, particularly that of ſending the *Euchariſt* to ſuch as were abſent. It is true, that in the *third Century*, the Lords prayer was uſed in ſome of the Aſſemblies of Chriſtians, yet not in all of them, only when the *Communicants* were by themſelves alone: They never repeated that prayer if any that were ouly *Catechumens* hapned to be preſent. Nor might (*h*) ſuch uſe it until they were baptized. They ſuppoſed it unlawful for Unregenerates to call God their Father. The Writings of *Auſtin* (*i*) and *Chryſoſtom* and others of the Ancients have made this indiſputable. There is an expreſſion in *Tertullian* (*k*) from whence ſome have gathered, that in thoſe days Chriſtians did not *Conclude* but *Begin* their prayers with *the Lords Prayer*. Nevertheleſs, they did not think it neceſſary. It

(*h*) *Hanc orationem baptizati orant* Auguſt *Epiſt.* 54.

(*i*) *In Matth Homil.* 18. *and* 2 *Cor Homil.* 2.

(*k*) *Præmiſſa Legitima oratione.* *Tertull. de orat. p.* 659.

is evident that *Origen* did ſometimes uſe this prayer; but without an opinion of its being neceſſary. For when he writes concerning a method of prayer, he adviſeth to begin and end with *Doxologies*: but he does not adviſe to begin or to end with the Lords prayer. *Clemens Alexandrinus* concludes his laſt Book of *Pedagogy* with prayer, yet not with the *Lords Prayer*. This enervates what Mr. *Richard Ward* and other object, *viz.* That if the Lords prayer, was given only to be a rule, and not enjoyned as a form, then Chriſtians for 1500 years together did not underſtand the true meaning of *Mat.* 6. 9. But ſuppoſe that an hundred years after the Apoſtles were all dead, *this Formality* had been generally practiſed, we could not from thence infer, that it was ſo in their dayes. For *Innovations* and *Declenſions* from the *Primitive Purity* were ſoon brought in unawares amongſt the Churches. In *Tertullians* Time, they *Prayed towards the Eaſt*. *Origen* alſo adviſeth it; but the Apoſtles never gave that Advice. In thoſe dayes they uſed *Exorciſms, ſigning with the Croſs* and *Chriſm* in Baptiſm. All which things were Corruptions in Religion, and are now rejected by moſt of the Reformed Churches. In thoſe Times alſo, they put eſpecial reſpect upon *Wedneſdays* and *Fridays*, which in *Tertullian* are called *Stationum dies*. Becauſe Chriſt was Sold on a *Wedneſday*, and Crucified on a *Friday* they would have more devotion on thoſe then on other dayes in the week. Theſe were

Early

Early Superstitions. And although we read nothing of their keeping the Feast of *Christ's Nativity* for more than an hundred years after this; nevertheless, *Whitsunday* and *Pentecost* was observed in Commemoration of the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles. Also *Lent* and *Easter* were accounted Sacred Times. The observation of *Easter* was as ancient as *Polycarp*, who was the Disciple of the Apostle *John*. Presently after *Polycarp*, Christians used every year to observe a day in Commemoration of the *Death Dayes* which they called *the Birth Dayes* of their Martyrs. I have mentioned these particulars to shew that the Argument from the *practice* of Churches after the Apostles Dayes, is not conclusive except it can be proved that the *Scripture* does warrant such a practice, and then it is *ex abundanti*, recommended to us, 1 *Cor.* 11. 16.

6. Other Arguments besides that of *Ancient Custom* which are commonly alledged for using *the Lords Prayer* as a *Form*, do not carry Conviction with them. It is pleaded, that our Prayers are Imperfect, when as this Form contains in it all that we are to pray for, therefore to make up *the Defects* of our Prayers, we must subjoyn this. To which has been replyed, that the *Decalogue* does contain in it, all the Duties which God requires of men, *Matth* 22. 40. But it does not therefore follow that Ministers should conclud their Imperfect Sermons, with a *Recitation* of the *Ten Commandments*. No more are they bound

to

to a *Repetition of the Lords Prayer*, at the Concluſion of their own imperfect ones. Moreover, we may not think that *Words and Syllables* will make amends for the *Defect* of our Prayers; for that is (as ſhall be further ſaid) to give to them what is proper to the *Merit* and *Interceſſion* of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. It is alſo pretended that every *Rabbi* or *Maſter* amongſt the Jews delivered a *Form of Prayer*, to his Diſciples. That *John Baptiſt* did ſo: And that in *Conformity* hereunto, the Diſciples Petitioned Chriſt to give them a *Form*, which he granted their deſires in: And that he took *every* Sentence of this which we call the *Lords Prayer* out of the Jews Common *Prayer-Book* at that time uſed amongſt them, and willed his Diſciples to *uſe it as a Form*. Thus do ſome ſay. And all this is ſooner ſaid than proved. Some have told us of things in the *Jewiſh Rituals* which others could never find there. *Baronius*, *Caſaubon* and many beſides, ſay, that it was uſual amongſt the Jews to waſh their feet before they ſat down to eat the Paſſover, and that therefore what is recorded, *Joh* 13. 5. was nothing but a Jewiſh cuſtom uſed at the Paſſover. Yet *Buxtorf* (who was as much converſant in the Writings of the Jews as any man in the world) ſays, that *if a man reads over all their Ritual Books, and the whole Talmud beſides, he will not find any ſuch thing therein.* Other particulars relating to the Adminiſtration of the *Lords Supper*, are by *Genebrard*, *Scaliger*, (with many more) pretended to be in imitation

tion of what is in the *Jewiſh Rituals*, whom the Learned Reader may ſee refuted by *Buxtorf* in his Diſſertation *de Cæna Dominica*. The like to this may be affirmed with reſpect to the Subject before us. But ſuppoſing (which yet remains to be demonſtrated) the Diſciples were to uſe this prayer as a Form whilſt they continued under the *Jewiſh Pedagogy*, it cannot from thence be concluded that Believers under the *New-Teſtament* are bound ſo to uſe it. There are ſome Learned men that do allow the Lords-Prayer to have been a *preſcribed Form*, that do not think it to be deſigned for the perpetual uſe of the Church as ſuch, but only for a *Temporary Form*. And that after our Lords Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, they ſhould no longer uſe it as a Form, becauſe therein is no expreſs mention of the name of Chriſt, nor asking Bleſſings for his ſake, nor aſcribing praiſes to God through him, which after his accompliſhing the work of Redemption, ought to be. Thus do they interpret that Scripture, *Joh.* 16 24. However it does not follow that if a *Form* were *proper* and needful for the *Jews*, that ſuch things are neceſſary for *Chriſtians* in the dayes of the Goſpel, wherein there is a more plentiful effuſion of the ſpirit of prayer. *Zech.* 12. 10 *We ſay not that all Forms are unlawful.* No doubt but that a man who has not the gift of prayer, had better make uſe of a *Form* of his own compoſing or taken out of ſome good Book, (but I would not adviſe to take one out of the *Maſs-Book*) to worſhip God

God with, in his Family, then not to have any Religious Worſhip at all therein. But if that man ſhall afterwards be bleſſed with a *Gift of Prayer*, for him to tye himſelf to a Form is (as uſeth to be ſaid) like as if one that has uſed Crutches whilſt he was weak, ſhould continue to uſe them after he has gained ſtrength. What *Liturgies* the *Jews* had whileſt they were yet the Church of God, we know not. Nor is there any great Credit to be given to what their *Rabbins* who are made up *of Fables*, ſhall think meet to tell us. Some of themſelves confeſs that Forms of Prayer were not always uſed by their Fathers. *Saubertus* in his late Learned *Academical Diſquiſitions*, Cites a paſſage of *R. Bechai*, (*m*) who ſayeth, *That from the time of Moſes until the Great Sanedrim, there was no ordinary Form of Prayer amongſt the Iſraelites, but every man made a prayer for himſelf, according to what knowledge and gift of utterance he was endued with.* If the Jews had Prayer Books of *Humane Compoſure* in our Saviours Time, (as our *Liturgical* men are perſwaded) it is too much boldneſs to Conjecture that the Lord borrowed the Petitions in the *Lords prayer* from them. What though *Grotius*, (*) and others find Expreſſions like thoſe, in Jews Prayer Books? It does not neceſſarily follow that they were taken from thence. Dr. *Lightfoot*

(m) *V. Saubert Palæſtra p.* 123.
(*) *v. Dr.* Taylors *ductor dubit. Lib.* 2. *c.* 3. *R.* 15.

foot. (n) chargeth the Jews with *Filching* out of the Gospel, particularly that they have Stolen those words, *Thy Kingdom come*, and those, *Lead us not into Temptation*, and inserted them into their *Liturgies*. This seems more probable, then that the Lord should take his Prayer out of their Service Books. It was counted Blasphemy in *Celsus*, when he affirmed that Christ borrowed many of his Divine Notions out of *Plato* Mr. *Boyse* mentions an horrid Assertion of Dr. *Combers* in his pretended Answer to Mr. *Clarksons* unanswerable discourse of *Liturgies*, viz. *That our Saviour was so afraid of Innovation as to take every Sentence of the Lords prayer out of the Jewish Forms then in use.* In that degenerate Age was he afraid to teach any thing that would seem *New* to them! How then did some who heard him Preach, say, *What new Doctrine is this?* Mar. 1. 27. Was the Lord who did so often reprove them for their Formality in Worship, *Afraid* of *Innovation* if they should change their *Vain Conversation received by Tradition from their Fathers*? Was that admirable *Directory* for prayer which none but he who is the *Wisdom of God* could be the Author of, all borrowed out of Jewish *Common Prayer-Books*, devised by no man knows who? *Credat Judæus Apella.*

7. That many have *Superstitiously* abused this blessed portion of Scripture, cannot be denied. They have set up the *Lords Prayer* in the

(n) *Joh.* 1. *p.* 1003.

the room of *Christ* himself, imagining that God will accept of their other Petitions for the sake of their repeating this *Form*, as if that would *Sanctifie* and make amends for the *defects* in their prayers, which to do belongs to the *Mediator*, nor can any thing else do it. The Judicious *Alting* (o) giveth this caution, *That in using the Lords Prayer men should be carefull of Superstition in thinking that there is a Latent Efficacy in Words and Syllables.* Papists will say their *Pater Noster* more often in an hour, then the Jews do their *Majan* prayer in a day, superstitiously dreaming that the pronouncing of those Letters and Syllables will save them. One of the most moderate (†) and ingenuous of their Writers speaks thus, *Both rising & going to-bed, sitting down and rising from board, and going about any particular action or business; I would have all good Christians to say the* Pater Noster. *It is* (saves he) *the only Prayer that I use at every place, at all times, and upon every accident; and instead of changing, I use often Repetition of it.* Thus speaks a Roman Catholick. Nor are all who call themselves *Protestants*, altogether free from *Superstition* in this matter. Many of them are (as Mr. *Fenner* speaks) in their saying the Lords Prayer, Guilty of *Syllabical Idolatry.* There are some make a *Charm* of those Letters and Syllables. What is it better when persons are Judged to be either innocent or guilty of the Crime of *Witchcraft*

(o) *Theol. problem p.* 740.
(†) Montaigne *Essayes. Ch.* 56. *p.* 172.

craft according as they have power to say or not to say the *Lords Prayer*? Whether it was Instituted to be a *Form* or no, I am sure it was never Instituted to Try who are *Witches*: Nor can the Inability of some Persons to pronounce those Words and Syllables, who can pronounce any other, proceed from natural causes, but from the operation of *Dæmons*. Nor is there certainty in the Experiment. *Glanvil* (as I remember) confesseth that this kind of *Ordeal* is fallible. I shall take notice of but one Allegation more: It is pretended that our Saviour has *Obliged us to a Form of Words* in the Administration of *Baptism*, and of *the Lords Supper*: And then why not as well to a Form of words in Prayer? If it were as is objected, there is no consequence in the Argument: It does not at all follow that if there are some Forms of Divine Institution, that then the Lords Prayer was given as a Form. Moreover, although it is Lawful and Commendable in Ministring Baptism to keep to the words of Institution in *Matth.* 28 19. Yet neither is this Commanded, but an Agreement in sence is sufficient. For it is evident that the Apostles did not alwayes keep to that *Form*. *Act* 2. 38 & 8. 16. & 10 48 & 19.5. This is so manifest, as that *Aquinas* confesseth it, only he supposeth that the Apostles had by Revelation a particular dispensation for their not keeping to the prescribed Form. Dr. *Lightfoot* sayes, that when the Apostles Baptised Jews, it was *in the Name of Jesus*, because the great Controversy amongst

them was, *Whether Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah*; but that when they Baptised the Gentiles where that Controversy had no footing, they Baptised *into the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.* The Greek & the Latin Church did not keep exactly to the same Form of words in their Ministring that Holy Ordinance. In the Greek Church sometimes they said, *I Baptise*, sometimes, *Be thou Baptised*: but their usual Form was, *This Servant of Christ is Baptised*: Yea they intermixed some words of their Belief with the words of Institution in their Administring Baptism. Thus *Justin Martyr* declares, that *Washing with Water is performed in the Name of the Father of all things, and our Lord God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit.* Again, he sayes, *in the Name of Christ who was Crucified under Pontius Pilate.* Amongst the Latins they did not keep to the Words and Syllables of the Institution. For *Cyprian* sayes, *In nomine*, in the Name, but *Tertullian*, *In nomen*, INTO the Name, (which is most agreeable to the Original.) And in another place he does not mention *Name* in the Form used in Baptism, but sayes, *Into the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.* This variation as to words as long as the sence and design was the same, they thought was no variation from the Precept. Of this Judgment are *Cartwright*, *Martinius*, and *Voetius* amongst our Modern Writers. The like is to be affirmed with respect to the *Lords Supper.* Notwithstanding the words of *Institution* are recited by three

three of the *Evangeliſts*, and by *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, nevertheleſs they all as to ſome words differ, but agree in the Subſtance of what is by each of them related, which ſhews that we are not in the Adminiſtration of the Holy Supper, limitted to the uſe of *alwayes the ſame Words & Syllables*. It is clear and manifeſt from *Auſtin*, and others of the Ancients that there was in thoſe dayes a great variety uſed in the *Conſecration* of the Elements. Now if the uſing the very words of Inſtitution in Miniſtring the Sacraments is not Commanded, much leſs are we Commanded to uſe the words Expreſſed in *our Lords Directory for Prayer*. We conclude then that ſince the uſe of thoſe words *as a Form* is only a thing *Indifferent*, and not neceſſary, or a Commanded duty; when the caſe is ſo circumſtanced that it cannot be done without *Offence*, it is rather a duty and will be moſt pleaſing to Chriſt not to uſe it as a Form. It is a ſound Principle which ſome of the *School men* have maintained. *Etiam Spiritualia non neceſſaria ſunt fugienda, ſi exijs Scandalum oritur. Hoſ.* 2. 16 1 *Cor.* 10. 32

I ſhall only add, that *Biddle* (the notorious *Socinian*) having aſſerted, that our Saviour Preſcribed the Lords Prayer to be uſed as a Form by his Diſciples, Dr. *Owen* propoſeth ſeveral *Queries* for him or any on his behalf to Anſwer; and amongſt others theſe, *Whether the aſſerting this Form of Words to be uſed, has not confirmed many in their Atheiſtical Blaſpheming the Holy Spirit of God, and His Grace in*

the Prayers of His People? And whether the Repetition of these words after men have been long Praying for the things contained in them, as the manner of some is; be not so Remote from any Pretence or Colour of warrant in the Scriptures, as that it is in plain termes Ridiculous Thus Dr. *Owen* in his Answer to *Biddle*. p. 669.

QUESTION XVII.

MAY *the Churches under the Presbyterian and Congregational Discipline maintain Communion with one another, notwithstanding their differing Sentiments as to Church Government?*

Answ. They may and ought to do so. In the Apostolical Churches there were as great and greater differences in Judgment then are those between the Brethren of these two Perswasions; who nevertheless did maintain a Christian Communion with each other, as it was their Duty to do. *Rom.* 14. 1, 2. *Phil.* 3. 15, 16 They have been *Confessors*, and Fellow-Sufferers for bearing witness to the same Cause of Truth, which should Endear them to each other. In matters of Faith they all agree. Yea, and in the *Substantials of Church Order*. They all say, that there ought to be nothing in the Worship of God, besides what Himself has appointed. No Officers in the Church, nor Sacrments, nor Censures

ſures but what are the Inſtitutions of Chriſt. A moderate Presbyterian, and a ſolid Congregational man agree in ſo many things, and differ in ſo few and ſmall things, that it would be a ſhame for them to divide and break Communion about them. A man that giveth himſelf to Reading and Searching after Truth, may in a few years time, ſee cauſe to differ from himſelf as much as a *Presbyterian* and *Congregational man* differ from one another. The *Provincial Aſſembly* of *London* in their Treatiſe of the Divine *Right of the Goſpel Miniſtry*. *Part* 1. *p.* 191. Speak reſpectfully of the *New England Platform of Church Diſcipline*, although they concur not therewith in ſome particulars, they ſay concerning the Miniſters of *New England*, that they *agree with them wholly in the ſame Confeſſion of Faith, and in many things of the greateſt concernment in the matter of Church Diſcipline. And that thoſe things wherein we differ, are not of ſuch conſequence as to make a Schiſm between us.* They further add, that *they can truly ſay as their Brethren in* New-England *do in the Preface to the Platform,* (which Preface was written by Mr. *Cotton*, and approved of by other Elders) that *it is far from us ſo to atteſt the Diſcipline of Chriſt as to deteſt the Diſciples of Chriſt.* Dr. *Arrowſmith* ſometimes *Regius Profeſſor* of Divinity in the Univerſity of *Cambridge*, notwithſtanding his being a Presbyterian, calls the Miniſters in *New-England*, *Fratres noſtros jure nobis dilectiſſimos*; Our Brethren deſervedly moſt dear unto us. *V. Tactica ſacra. p.* 115. The Godly

Learned Mr. *Rutherford* has declared, that if the *Congregationals* would all come up to what Mr. *Cotton* asserts in his Book of the *Keyes of the Kingdom*, he would meet them half way. Mr. *Baxter*, not long before he went to his *Everlasting Rest*, said to me, If all *Independents* were like *New-England Independents*, we should soon be one. Our Congregational Brethren in *England* who met at the *Savoy*, *Anno* 1658. Have this for the last Article of their Discipline, *Churches gathered and walking according to the mind of Christ, judging other Churches (though less pure) to be true Churches, may receive to occasional Communion with them, such Members of those Churches as are credibly testified to be Godly, and to live without offence.* The practice of the Churches in *New-England* ha's been according to this profession. For we have received to our Communion those that have come to us with Testimonials from Presbyterian Ministers in *England*, and divers that have come to us from *Scotland*: Yea, and some *French Refugees* of whose sincere Piety we have had Testimonials. And (which is more) several worthy Ministers known to be of the Presbyterian Judgment who came to us from *England*, particularly Mr. *Morton* and Mr. *Bayly*, were received among us with the greatest respects that the Elders and Churches in *New England* could manifest towards them. And whereas they did scruple a Re-ordination by Imposition of hands (which is usual in these Churches) that was not urged upon them, but they were established in the Churches

Churches who Elected them with faſting and prayer, without any laying on of hands. Mr. *Cotton* not long before his departure to a better World, drew up ſome *propoſals* for the *Accommodation and Union* of theſe two Reforming Perſwaſions, in which his Spirit was very much ingaged. My moſt dear Brother *Samuel Mather* (who was well known to the Churches in *New England* above forty years ago, and after that in *England* and in *Ireland*, where he ended his days) not long before he finiſhed his Courſe, wrote a ſmall Book which beareth the Title of *Irenicum*, or an *Eſſay for Union*; wherein he ſhows how inconſiderable the Differences are between thoſe of the *Presbyterian and Congregational Judgment*, and that they may without any ſelling of Truth to purchaſe peace, mutually own and give the Right Hand of Fellowſhip to each other, as true Churches and Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, that they ſhould lay aſide all their Animoſities, and remember that Golden Rule, Rom. 14. 3. *Let not him that Eateth, deſpiſe him that Eateth not, and let not him that Eateth not, judge him which Eateth, for God has received him.* So let not him who depends on the way of Claſſical Subordination, deſpiſe him that dependeth not, and let not him that dependeth not, judge him that dependeth, for the Lord has received them both.

Amongſt thoſe who go under the name of *Congregational*, there is a variety of apprehenſion in ſome *Diſciplinary Controverſies*. Some of them have thought that no Children ſhould be

be admitted to Baptism whose Parents are not admitted to the Lords Table. This was the opinion of our Learned Mr. *Chauncey*, who was many years Præsident of the Colledge, and of Mr. *Davenport*, and some few others of the first Ministers in these Churches. But Mr. *Cotton*, my Father *Mather*, Mr. *Norton*, Mr. *Rogers*, Mr. *Mitchel*, and the generality of our *New-England* Divines were for a greater Latitude as to the subject of Baptism. Some esteem none to be Members of the *Visible Church*, excepting those that belong to *Particular Churches*: So Mr. *Hooker*, Mr. *Stone*, and most of our Ministers. But in this the generality of *Congregationals* in *England* vary from them. They suppose that *all the men in the world, who deserve the name of Christians*, or that make a profession of the true Religion, and do not destroy that profession by any Error in Judgment, or Scandal in Conversation, are the *Catholick Visible Church*, of which number there are many who are not in full Communion with any particular *Instituted Church*. Some limit Baptism to Membership in a particular Church. So has it been with us in *New England* for the most part. But other *Congregationals* differ from us in this point. Dr. *Goodwin* has strenuously asserted, that a *Particular Church* is the Subject of that Ordinance of the *Lords Supper*, but not of *Baptism*. And of this Judgment were Dr *Owen*, and Mr. *Greenhill*, as both of them did many years since in Letters I received from them, signifie to me; & Dr. *Owen* in divers of his printed Books, declares that

he was ſo perſwaded So that they who go under the name of *Congregational* muſt withdraw Communion from one another as well as from *Presbyterians*, if differing ſentiments about *Diſciplinary Queſtions*, be a ſufficient ground for diſunion and ſeparation. Dr. *Ames* was *Congregational*, highly approving of the Churches in *New-England*; and purpoſing to have ended his dayes amongſt them: On his Death-bed (as one that was then with him has publickly teſtified) he declared that if there were any Churches in the World whom God would own, they were ſuch as thoſe in *New-England*. And altho' *Gangræna* ſays, that then it was a mercy that Learned *Ames* lived no longer, better men than he will not ſay ſo. Dr. *Twiſs* was Presbyterian, nevertheleſs, there was an Endearedneſs between *Ames* and him. Mr. *Marſhal* and Mr. *Strong* Loved as Brethren notwithſtanding the former was Presbyterian, and the Latter Congregational: Two *Luſtres* of years are now expiring, ſince the Miniſters in *London* of both thoſe perſwaſions declared their readineſs to *Walk together according to the Goſpel Rules of Communion of Churches.* Would all that pretend to the Name of Presbyterian obſerve the Articles of that *Union*, the *Congregationals* in *New England* would readily give them the Right Hand of Fellowſhip. Eſpecially if they would practice according to ſome *Eſſential Articles* therein; particularly that Article which declares, *that none ſhall be admitted to all ſpecial Ordinances but ſuch as are not only free from Scandal in their lives, but perſons of viſible*

ble Godlineſs, making a credible profeſſion of cordial Subjection to Chriſt. And that Article which ſays, *We are moſt willing and ready to give an account of our Church proceedings to each other when deſired.* Alſo that Article wherein they ſay, *we agree that in order to concord, and in weighty and difficult caſes, it is needful and according to the mind of Chriſt, that the Miniſters of ſeveral Churches be conſulted and adviſed with about ſuch Matters.* Is not the Embodying into a Church State a weighty matter? Is not the Calling and Ordaining a Miniſter a *Weighty Matter*? They that ſhall do ſuch things without adviſing with Neighbour Churches or Miniſters, muſt think of ſome other name whereby they may be diſtinguiſhed. For it is a very vain thing for them to pretend to be either Presbyterian or Congregational: when the *Fundamental Articles of their Union are manifeſtly* tranſgreſſed & violated. For my own part I have many years deſired to ſee an *Union* of theſe two *Reforming Parties.*

When I was laſt at *London*, I did that little I was Capable of, to promote that *Union* which ha's been happily Effected. And I account it one of the greateſt Mercies of my Life, that ever I was at all inſtrumental in ſo Bleſſed a work. In ſeveral points, wherein thoſe of the Congregational perſwaſion differ from the other, I am ſatisfyed in my own Judgment, that they have Truth on their ſide; nevertheleſs, there have been as Eminent men for Piety & Learning of the Presbyterian perſwaſion, as any the World ha's in this laſt Age been Bleſſed with, whom it is an affliction

affliction at all to differ from. I therefore finish, with the words of a Great man among us, (z) who speaking of some Presbyterian Divines, thus Expresseth himself, *Those Godly Learned Divines we do so highly Esteem, & so deeply Reverence in the Lord, that were the cause our own, & not the Lords, we should rather let it fall, than defend it, by Opposition to the Grave Judgement of such Holy Saints.*

(z) *Mr.* Cotton. *way of the Churches.* p. 84.

THE END.

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